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# XLR8R

86  
APRIL  
2005

ACCELERATING MUSIC AND CULTURE



*Ellen Allien*

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OF BERLIN TECHNO

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*New Stuff*



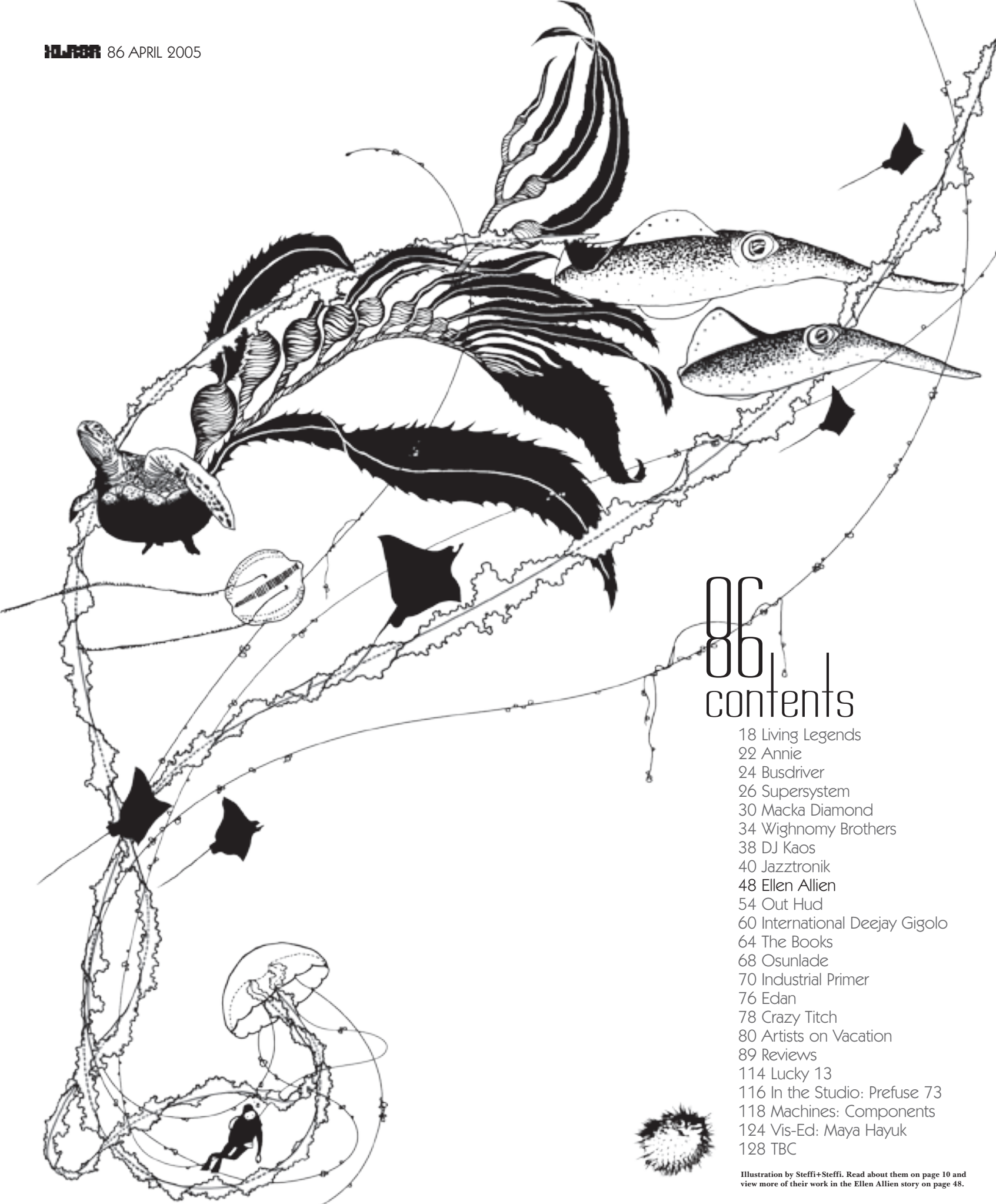
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Illustration by Steffi+Steffi. Read about them on page 10 and view more of their work in the Ellen Allien story on page 48.



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## ED'S RANT LOVE STORY



I'm really glad I wasn't editing this magazine in the early '90s. I don't want to give you the impression I didn't like the early '90s—I loved them—but I would have gotten totally sick of arguing with people that techno (even the bleakest, most pounding varieties) does have soul.

These days, it goes without saying that behind every piece of electronic music is a human heart. Sometimes, this heart is clad in a sequined cowboy hat, a god complex, and a good-natured absence of irony; sometimes, this heart controls a dirty, blood-soaked sampler. Though cover artist Ellen Allien holds what could be called superstar DJ status in her native Germany, she wears this heart firmly on her sleeve...and her record sleeves. Meanwhile, her music has so many melancholy minor key chords and expressive clicks 'n' cuts it could almost be called emo techno. (Sorry, kids). Eat your heart out, rock 'n' roll.

Speaking of rock, DJ Hell—who was around before electroclash, and will be around after—brings his punk rock and industrial roots to bear when curating his Gigolo imprint, but also keeps a sense of humor about things. His was one of the first underground labels to promote the personalities behind so-called "faceless techno," and the rest of the industry has followed suit.

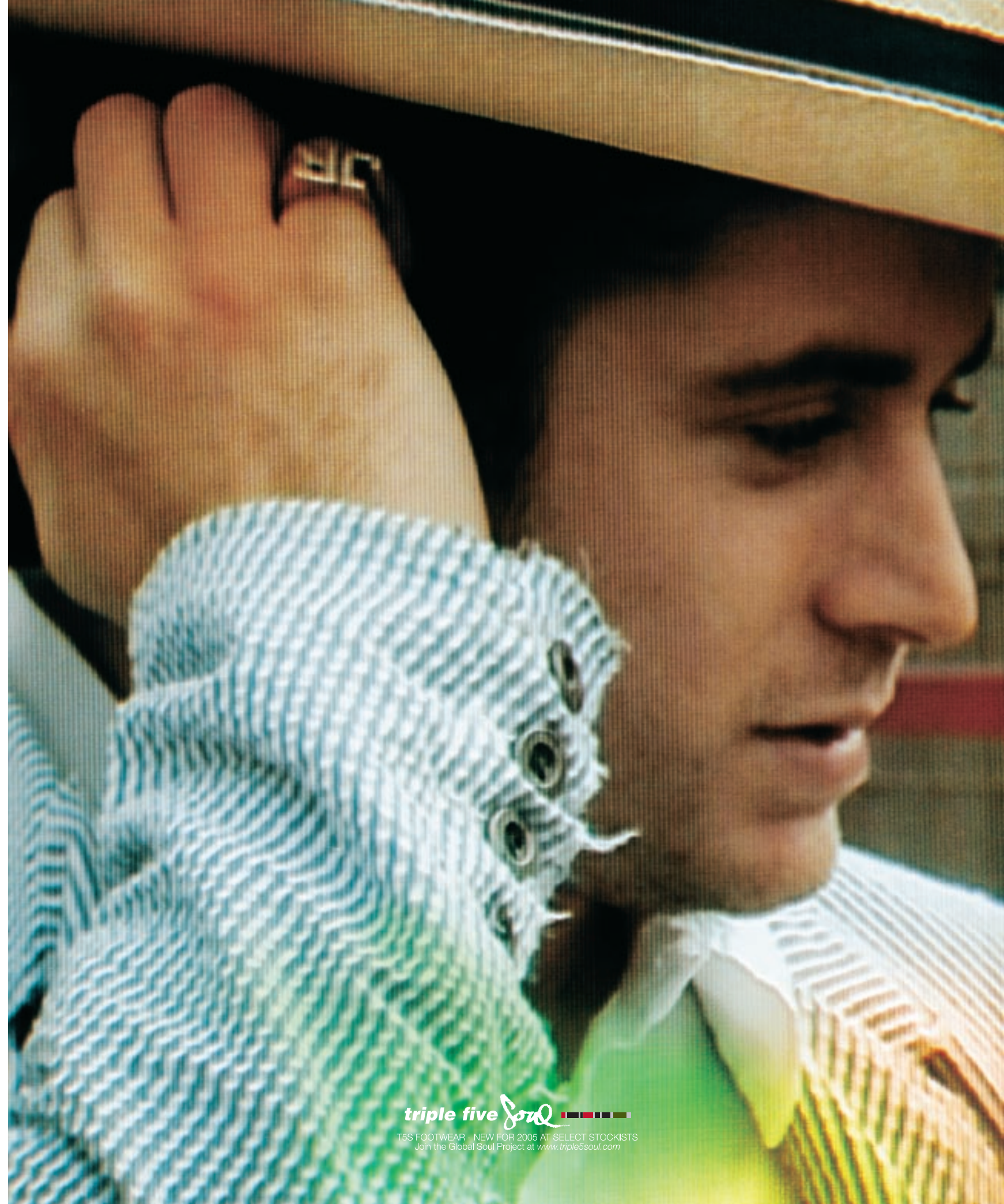
Out Hud were raised punk rock too, but their new album is punk only in its shambolic Californian DIY-ness; otherwise, it is—in the best possible way—like everything yet nothing I've ever heard. According to reticent-ass band member Justin Vandervolgen (see page 54), that's the highest praise we can give. Well, okay. I just gave it.

Do I have to convince you that these people have heart? I don't think so. You're probably reading *XLR8R* because you know we cover artists that we believe in, and not just the next big thing. If you're unfamiliar with us, just enticed by the pretty pictures and crazy illustrations, it's good to have you here. We bust just as much ass enlisting new graphic design and photo talent as we do combing record stores and the internet for the latest 12"s.

In fact, a large part of *XLR8R*'s heart comes from the fact that most of our staff—and quite a few of our writers—are DJs and musicians themselves. Publisher Andrew Smith is a former electro bod who is literally EDMX's biggest fan. Art Director Brianna toured the country as a drum & bass DJ, and I'm the resident breakbeat fanatic, from grime to 1992 UK hardcore to dirty, dirty jump up jungle. Ad sales don Roy Dank has delivered serious slabs of liquid funk d&b with his partners in Mathematics, and he currently DJs Italo-disco and punk funk at his Pop Your Funk night in NYC. And Tomas throws down wicked reggae and dub sets—if he's been dancing with Lady Red Stripe, he'll even give you a special dedication in the dance. (But I've got dibs on Sean Paul's "Deport Dem.")

On that note, I'm off to have my own deadline dance party to the Kelly Osbourne CD. Umm...just kidding. I'm actually doing the wop to Abe Duque and Elephant Man. Enjoy this issue and send us some letters—let us know what's keeping your heart beating.

-Vivian Host, Editor



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See more of Camille Rose Garcia's work at [www.merrykarnowskiartgallery.com](http://www.merrykarnowskiartgallery.com)

★ "Contradiction" by **Camille Rose Garcia**

[ConverseGallery.com](http://ConverseGallery.com)

## STAFF BOX

**EDITOR IN CHIEF** Andrew Smith ([andrew@xlr8r.com](mailto:andrew@xlr8r.com))

**EDITOR** Vivian Host ([vivian@xlr8r.com](mailto:vivian@xlr8r.com))

**MANAGING EDITOR** Tomas A. Palermo ([tomas@xlr8r.com](mailto:tomas@xlr8r.com))

**MUSIC TECHNOLOGY EDITOR** Jesse Terry ([jesse@xlr8r.com](mailto:jesse@xlr8r.com))

**SENIOR WRITER** Toph One ([redwine@xlr8r.com](mailto:redwine@xlr8r.com))

**COPY EDITOR** Elka Karl

**EDITORIAL INTERN** Sabrina Ford

**STAFF WRITERS** Eric K. Arnold, Pete Babb, Susanna Bolle, Roy Dank, Matt Fisher, Rob Geary, Alexis Georgopoulos, Ross Hogg, Christine Hsieh, Selena Hsu, Gerald "Gik" Kelleher, Anna Klafner, Cameron Macdonald, J. David Marston, Mark McNeill, Stacy Meyn, Peter Nicholson, Brion Paul, Brock Phillips, Tim Pratt, Praxis, Dave Segal, Philip Sherburne, Dave Steffox, Martin Turenne, Janet Tzou, Tony Ware

**CONTRIBUTING WRITERS** Anna Balkrishna, Sarah Bentley, Derek Beres, Cooper Bethea, Richard Brophy, Ben Bush, Stephen Christian, Carla Costa, Araya Crosskill, DeepSix, Amber Drea, Stacey Dugan, Nick Follett, Evan Friel, David Hemingway, Chachi Jones, David Katz, Luciana Lopez, Steve Marchese, Jenn Marston, Doug Morton, Zaid Mudhaffer, Sean O'Neal, Chris Orr, Alex Posell, Mark Pytlak, Ryan Romana, Jesse Server, Julianne Shepherd, Patrick Sisson, Daniel Sivek, Ryan Sommer, Dave Stenton, Velanthe Stewart, Scott Thill, Tamara Warren, Brolin Winning, Rob Wood, Jonathan Zwickel

**ART DIRECTOR** Brianna Pope ([brianna@xlr8r.com](mailto:brianna@xlr8r.com))

**LAYOUT/PRODUCTION** David Clark ([davidc@xlr8r.com](mailto:davidc@xlr8r.com))

**FEATURED DESIGNER** Steffi+Steffi

**ELECTRONIC IMAGING CONSULTANT** Christopher Woodcock

**STAFF PHOTOGRAPHERS** David Axelbank, Kareem Black, Marcus Clackson, Jessica Miller, Tom Oldham, Zen Sekizawa, Christopher Woodcock

**CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHERS** Debbie Bragg, Suzy Gorman, Florian Kolmer, David Lachman, Erik Lang, Daniel Mayer, Dan Monick, Shigeru Toyama, Magnus Unnar

**STAFF ILLUSTRATOR** Chuck Anderson for No Pattern

**CONTRIBUTING ILLUSTRATORS** Oksana Badrak, Gastón Caba, LMAC, Jonathan Moller, Derek Morris for Trophy, Hisashi Ohkawa, Phlash, Jessica Rotter

**PUBLISHER** Andrew Smith ([andrew@amalgam.us](mailto:andrew@amalgam.us))

**BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT** Michael Prommer ([michael@amalgam.us](mailto:michael@amalgam.us))

**MARKETING DIRECTOR** Emma Katznelson ([emma@amalgam.us](mailto:emma@amalgam.us))

**DISTRIBUTION/MARKETING MANAGER** Jenn Marston ([jenn@amalgam.us](mailto:jenn@amalgam.us))

**EAST COAST ADVERTISING SALES** Roy Dank ([roy@amalgam.us](mailto:roy@amalgam.us))

**WEST COAST ADVERTISING SALES** Sue Kim ([sue@amalgam.us](mailto:sue@amalgam.us))

**ACCOUNTING MANAGER** Jamie Kochan ([jamie@amalgam.us](mailto:jamie@amalgam.us))

**ADVERTISING INTERN** Leah O'Callaghan

**CO-PUBLISHER** Arias Hung

**ADVERTISING:** Dial 415.861.7583, fax 415.861.7584, email [advertising@xlr8r.com](mailto:advertising@xlr8r.com), or mail XLR8R Magazine, 1388 Haight St. #105, San Francisco, CA 94117.

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**ON THE COVER:** Ellen Allien illustration by Steffi+Steffi

**CONTACT US:** San Francisco Main HQ: 1388 Haight St. #105, San Francisco, CA 94117;

New York Office: 350 Seventh Ave. #1504, New York, NY 10001;

[letters@xlr8r.com](mailto:letters@xlr8r.com), Fax 415.861.7584

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## "Contradiction" by **Converse**



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the punk show and theme park, Camille Rose Garcia

was inspired to paint her beautiful nightmares.

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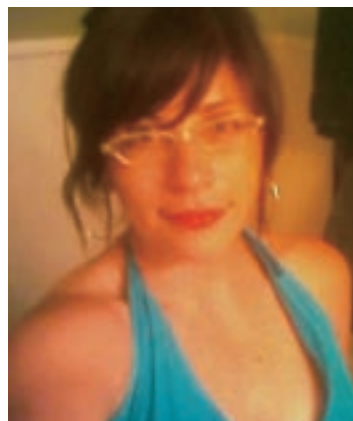


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## CONTRIBUTORS



**JULIANNE SHEPHERD**  
 Julianne Shepherd, former instructor of *Cardiofunk: High-Impact Danceaerobics*, is a writer, editor, choreographer, and blogger (see [urbanhonking.com/cowboyz](http://urbanhonking.com/cowboyz)) living in Brooklyn. She is working on a book about feminism and popular music, loves Theo Parrish, invented the slang term “binoculars,” and spends all her brunch money at Beso (210 5th Ave., Park Slope, Brooklyn). If you are interested in having a dance-off, seriously, get in touch.



**STEFFI+STEFFI**  
 Berlin-based Steffi+Steffi have been active together since 2002. They have developed an ongoing collaboration with DJ/producer Ellen Allien where they have the freedom to be as playful as they like. Their contributions to BPitch Control include record covers, clothing, slides, and live video projections, among other things. Steffi+Steffi also designed Adidas’ 2004 lookbook, and their illustrations have appeared in *Spex*, *Groove*, and *Echtzeit*. The duo is currently working on a hand-drawn film and a stop-motion puppet short.



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 (much more than records)



**ROB WOOD**  
 Ex-editor of *Jockey Slut* Rob Wood is now a London-based freelance journalist who writes for *The Observer*, *The Independent*, *Harpers & Queen*, *Hotdog*, and easyJet’s in-flight publication. He can also be found giving music advice to brands, A&Ring, and DJing around London and at festivals such as Sonar and The Big Chill. He is about to start work on a book about DJing, which he hopes will be less boring than it sounds, and he’s editor of the exciting independent music download site [www.tunetribe.com](http://www.tunetribe.com). As you might have guessed, Rob likes music. Big time.



**BRIANNA POPE**  
 Brianna Pope can take apart and put back together a .45 in 12.9 seconds. It takes her slightly longer to layout a whole issue of *XLR8R*...but not much. Ms. Pope likes bacon, fonts, knife fights, obscure Chinese teas, stoned karaoke, noise bands, and *letting herself crazy*—not necessarily in that order—and she will school you on R&B so don’t even try to test. Fueled only by Popeye’s chicken and hate—and with her trusty canine companion Foxy by her side (literally)—she redesigned almost the whole magazine for this issue. Enjoy it, bitches.



**How Dirty Boys Get Clean.**  
 NEW AXE SHOWER GEL





## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Like us? Hate us? Write us! Email letters to [letters@xlr8r.com](mailto:letters@xlr8r.com) or send mail to XLR8R Magazine 1388 Haight Street #105 San Francisco, CA 94117.

### CAUGHT IN OUR WEB

Hey XLR8Rs,

Just wanted to tell you that I've been appreciating your website archive. It's nice to catch up with some of the articles I missed. (Yeah, I admit, I threw away some old issues...) Better yet, that shit is searchable. It's also helping big me up to my old friends—some-one I know from Norway recently emailed me after they read an old Polar article on there.

Thanks dudes,

Polar

### LADIES FIRST

Hello,

My name is DJ Ultraviolet and I have an event out here in Philadelphia called Ladies Love Hip-Hop. It's one of the dopest parties in the city; it's an all female DJ line-up and we feature classic hip-hop

all night long, anything from MC Breeze to Nas to Oh No—no commercial stuff whatsoever. I've been doin' this event since August and every month after and have created quite a following! I've started my own promotions company called The 79 Group. All of the artwork for our posters/flyers is hand drawn pieces and paintings by an artist in my crew. You can google the name Saury Benitez for a *Philadelphia Weekly* article.

DJ Ultraviolet (*The Seven-9*)

**CORRECTIONS:** In the Nu:Tone album review in issue #85, we referred to "Hospital bosses London Elektriciry." London Elektriciry is comprised of one man, Tony Colman. Former member Chris Goss left in 2002 to manage the label.

## XLR8R'S "LOOSE THREADS" CONTEST WIN WICKED CLOTHES FROM STAPLE AND NEW MUSIC FROM OUT HUD.

XLR8R invites you to liven up your spring wardrobe and add to a gem to your music library for your next house party. How do you get the hook up? Enter *XLR8R Magazine's Loose Threads* contest featuring prizes generously provided by New York graphic design/apparel company **Staple** and superb Chicago record label **Kranky**.

Why be stoked? Staple has created dope designs for Triple Five Soul, Burton Snowboards, Casio G Shock, and Supreme International. Check them out online or at their Reed Space gallery at 151 Orchard St. in New York. Kranky has released music by everyone from Labradford to Low, and now plays their trump card with the second offering from Brooklyn dub dance band Out Hud.

One winner will receive an entire outfit and accessories courtesy of Staple. Four people will win the new Out Hud CD, *Let Us Never Speak of It Again* (Kranky), as well as a limited edition 12" vinyl single. To enter, simply answer the following three questions:

1. What are two shoe companies Staple has done design or art direction for?
2. How many members are currently in Out Hud?
3. Which is more loose: A) 50 Cent's denim jeans or B) Donald Rumsfeld's dress slacks?

**One Grand Prize winner will receive:** Complete outfit and accessories from Staple plus Out Hud's new CD and 12"

**Four Runners-Up will receive:** Out Hud CD and limited edition 12"

Entries will be accepted via mail and email. Entries must be received by May 1, 2005. Send your answers to XLR8R's "Loose Threads" contest, 1388 Haight St. #105, San Francisco, CA 94117 or email [contest@xlr8r.com](mailto:contest@xlr8r.com) with "Loose Threads Contest" in the subject line.

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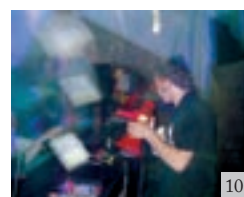
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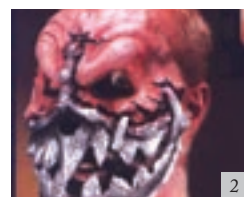
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9



10



2

**B**J “Bitter” Bastard came, saw, hated, then came. Ha ha. No, really. Nothing stokes the Bastard’s fire like some good old-fashioned hateration—it’s just that sometimes it’s hard to remember all the hateful things in the world on, like, three hours of sleep. And it was really hard this time to resist the temptation to write a whole column about Kelly Osbourne. (We’ve spared you, but if you are strong of stomach check [www.kellyosbourne.org](http://www.kellyosbourne.org) for a gag-worthy description of the making of her new album and [www.stilettokillers.com](http://www.stilettokillers.com) for inappropriate presents for your nieces.) In any case, here’s BJ’s springtime bloodbath. Enjoy.

**1. Kelly Osbourne’s new album** We were prepared to be offended by the fact that Kelly’s second record was considered electronic music, but then we listened to it and it’s just some more bad ‘80s synth-pop. (Whew! Everyone except the landfill breathe a sigh of relief.) Someone must have informed Kelly that in “dance music” it’s okay to use plenty of filters to make your voice sound better (see Cher’s “Believe”).

**2. Drinking so much coffee you get lockjaw** Sucks.

**3. Overuse of the word crunk** Only one-sixteenth of the people using this word have actually experienced being crunk. We would like to think we’re part of that one-sixteenth...but we’re probably not.

**4. Dirty south blogs** There are so many of these on the internet now and we get the sneaking suspicion they’re all written by computer nerds in the Atlanta suburbs who would shit their pants if they were actually standing next to Bun-B. The exception to

this is Trrill—which, despite the name, is actually a queer opera blog.

**5. “What do you do?” and “Where do you work?”** File under worst pick-up lines ever...unless you’re willing to have sex on your desk during lunchtime.

**6. The Unicorns break-up** Don’t get it twisted: BJ “Bitter” Bastard was no fan of the artsy-fartsy indie pop wankery of those twee little Unicorns. But now that they’ve broken up, we’re about to be treated to something even worse, a hip-hop side project of theirs called Th’ Corn Gangg. Make it stop.

**7. Reggaeton** Why does 98.2% of all reggaeton just sound like someone screaming? And stop trying to be cool with Americans by putting Lil’ Jon and Pitbull on every track; it’s not working. Surely Puerto Rico has artists who act like the missing Muppets, too.

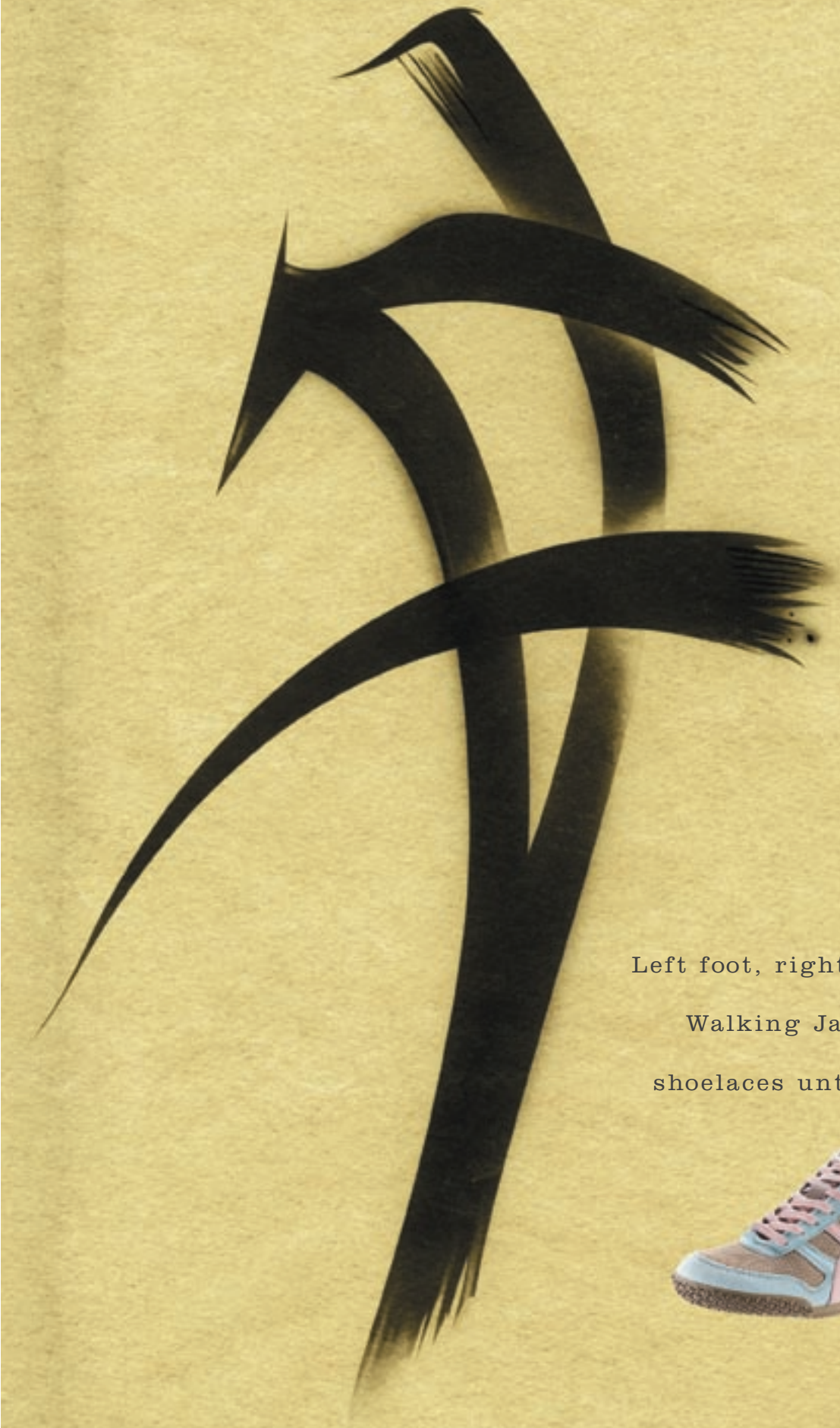
**8. Vincent Gallo’s website** Take one look at [www.vincentgallo.com](http://www.vincentgallo.com)—not a fan site, but maintained by the man himself—and I dare you to call him a genius one more time. Seriously, call him a genius and I am going to pop you in the mouth.

**9. Mukluk boots** These were, like, the winter rage for rich girls, even in L.A where it’s 70 degrees and wearing big furry things on your feet makes no sense. And let’s not speak of how weird it is to see Paris Hilton representing the footwear of the repressed Eskimo. Sigh. Fashion is a cruel-ass mistress.

**10. Breakcore’s war of long song titles** Kid 606 started this shit with numbers like “Andy Warhol Is Dead But We Still Have Hope” and “I Wanna Rock (You Just Left the Smallest Rave On Earth)” but now Shitmat (shown above) takes it over the top with “That Goat Skull Is No Good For Thirsty Psy-Trance Workers.” Yo word nerds, your songs are already crazy enough without the paragraph-long titles.



Shu Haiku by



Left foot, right, again.

Walking Japanese streets, free shoelaces untied.



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Alison Tara & Scott Siz (Turntable Lab)  
Egg Foo (Secret Frequency Crew)  
Roy Dank (Pop Your Funk)

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ROOM 2: DJ Spinna, Jazzanova,  
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Neil Aline, DJ Language,  
DJ Lindsey, Citizen Kane, DJ Spun,  
James Fl@#\$%^ Friedman, Ben Dietz,  
Rich Medina, DJ Eli, DJ Spinna,  
DJ Akalepse

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5 pm-9 pm  
Open Vodka/Beer Bar 5 pm-6 pm  
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## FOUR DAYS OF FURY WED-SAT, MARCH 23-26 Presented by adidas Originals and XLR8R

WED, MARCH 23  
DJ Le Spam, Osunlade,  
Sean Holland, Induce

THU, MARCH 24  
SMC, Sam Valenti IV, Illegal  
Volume (James Fl@#\$%^  
Friedman & Max Pask),  
Josh Eustis of Telefon Tel Aviv

FRI, MARCH 25  
DJ D-Marie, Roy Dank, Ryan Elliott,  
Neurotic Drum Band (John Selway  
& Ulysses)

SAT, MARCH 26  
Twilite Tone, DJ Hottpants, Syrup  
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# LIVING LEGENDS

VETERAN CALI MCS JET TO MAUI TO MAKE A HIP-HOP MASTERPIECE.

WORDS: ERIC K. ARNOLD PHOTO: DAN MONICK

What a long, strange trip it's been. The Living Legends have grown considerably since 1997, when they germinated in the now-famous San Leandro Avenue "Outhouse" in East Oakland's Fruitvale District. Now numbering nine members—Sunspot Jonz, Luckyiam, Eligh, The Grouch, Bicasso, Aesop the Black Wolf, Murs, Arata, and Scarub—they've been called a West Coast Wu-Tang, more for their Voltron-like collective philosophy than stylistic similarities. Like the Wu, they've branched out into various subgroups (including CMA, Mystik Journeymen, G&E, and 3MG), yet they might have more in common with indie comrades Hieroglyphics, Rhymesayers, and Def Jux, who, along with the LL crew, have defined quality underground hip-hop for the last decade.

"That's not bad company," says Luckyiam, over the phone from LA. Yet while the Legends have turned their crew name into a self-fulfilling prophecy, they're far from done. "We want to take it even farther," says The Grouch, adding that their efforts up to now have merely been "laying the groundwork for what is to come."

The next phase in their quest to manifest their own destiny is *Classic*, a group album recorded the way few people record group albums anymore. The entire crew holed up in a beach house in Maui for a month to create what is easily their finest artistic statement yet. The album's title is perhaps best outlined on "Blast Your Radio," which

explains that retro doesn't automatically mean classic, and that classic doesn't necessarily mean old.

Amazingly, for an album with nine distinct voices on it (plus some outside production by Madlib, DJ Epic, DJ Khalil, and Beam One), *Classic* resonates with the kind of solidarity that only comes from a concerted group effort. "This one was a lot more cohesive" than previous efforts, The Grouch notes, the main difference being "the actual experience of everybody being in the same house at once."

Luckyiam mentions that making *Classic* took the group back to their humble (i.e. hella broke) beginnings in the Outhouse days, when their creative juices first flowed. Perhaps most importantly, it renewed their camaraderie—not just as recording artists, but also as friends. "Everyone has their own unique place in this," he says. To the Grouch, what makes the Legends special is their normalcy; "people get the feeling that our group is made up of real people," he notes. And, as the saying goes, real people do real things.

*Classic* is out now on Legendary Music. [www.llcrew.com](http://www.llcrew.com)

Living Legends (clockwise from back left): Murs, Scarub, Bicasso, Eligh, Aesop, Grouch, Luckyiam, Sunspot Jonz



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1. Mushroom farm t-shirt;  
2. Vinyl Will Kill box set;  
3. Scarygirl page from Vinyl Will Kill book;  
4. custom XLR8R sketchel;  
5. Lost Boy Skout

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“Phase One”  
↙ ↘

## FROM JEREMY WITH LOVE

Australian outfit specializes in cool graphic design collaborations.

“I don’t really consider myself a graphic designer; more, say, an instigator of projects,” says Jeremy, the creative mastermind behind Jeremyville. The Sydney-based powerhouse, run by eight core members, incorporates a physical store, a web portal, and a clothing line; they also design toys and skateboards and curate projects such as *Vinyl Will Kill*, a book about toy designers. The collective’s latest endeavor, a collaboration with Design Is Kinky, is Sketchel, wherein 60 artists (including Miss Van, Mr. Jago, and Freakclub) created customized artists’ satchels. (The designs also appear in an accompanying book, which was released in March at the Sydney design conference Semi Permanent.) We sat Jeremy down, with the Velvet Underground droning softly in the

background, and asked him a few questions about how he does his thing. *Vivian Host*  
[www.jeremyville.com](http://www.jeremyville.com)

**What are your three favorite clothing companies?**

Silas, Commonwealth Stacks, and The Quiet Life. The Jeremy label is a bit of a favorite, too.

**Your website says you never sleep. What’s your favorite thing to do in the middle of the night?**

Paint, sketch, and try and outbid someone on eBay at the last minute.

**Why did you decide to switch from being an archi-**

**tect to what you do now?**

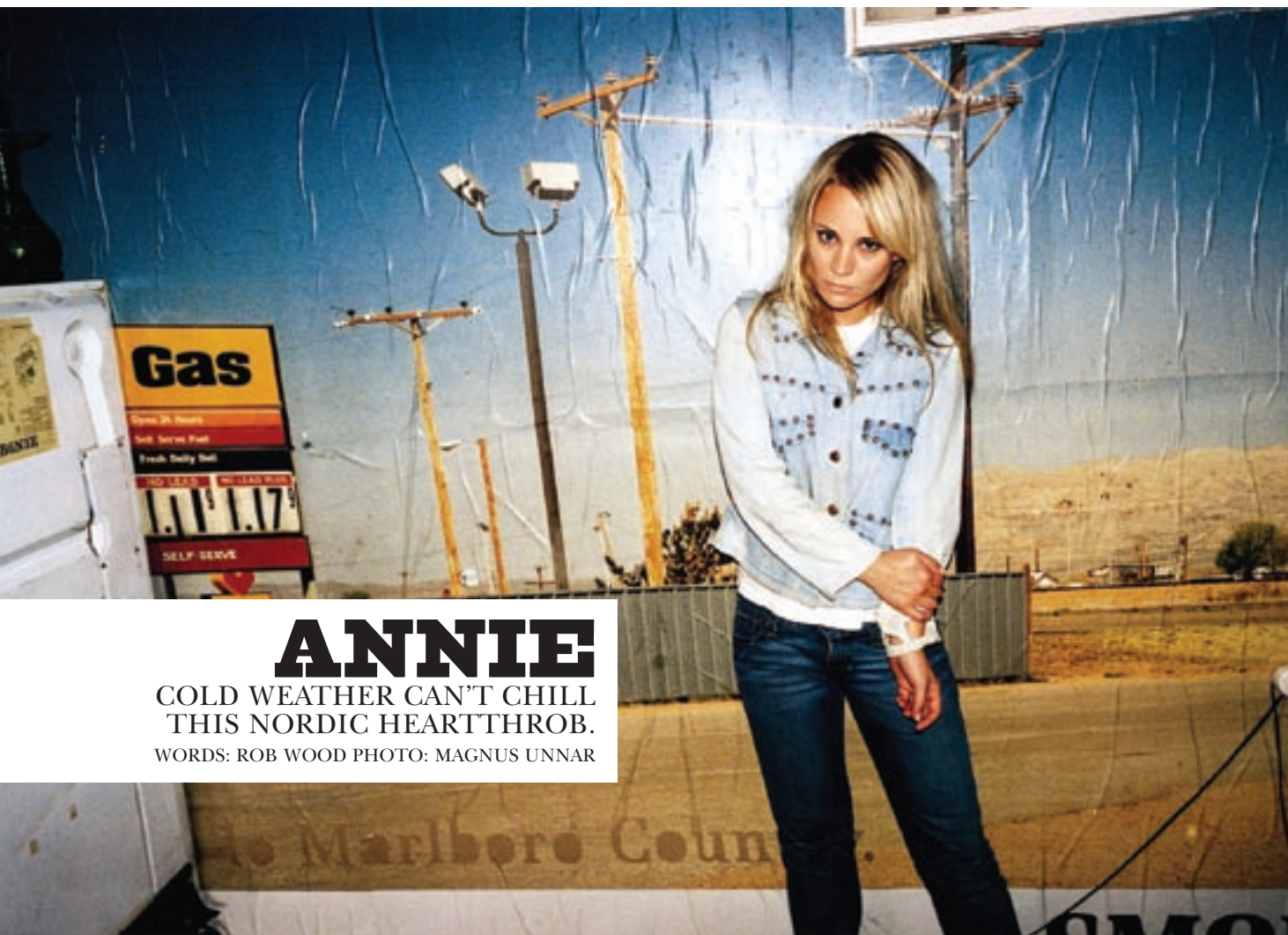
I never really wanted to work as an architect in an office job, but still wished to have that creative *and* professional discipline behind me, rather than, say, art or design school or design school, which is more just creative.

**What is your hard drive called?**

That is a great question. It’s called Warhol.

**You do clothing, CDs, art shows, books, and now satchels. What are you dreaming of next?**

Going to a secluded beach house and just quietly creating some storybooks for adults. To live like Dr. Seuss is my idea of heaven.



**ANNIE**  
COLD WEATHER CAN'T CHILL  
THIS NORDIC HEARTTHROB.  
WORDS: ROB WOOD PHOTO: MAGNUS UNNAR

If you find yourself regularly throwing cushions at the TV in protest of the banality of most modern-day pop music, Annie has come to save you. Her sparkling, life-affirming songs may be destined for the charts but don't be fooled—they are packed with a knowing cool that comes from the heart of underground Norway.

It was the breezy pop/house track "The Greatest Hit" that first got Annie Lilia Berge Strand noticed in 1999. Produced by her then partner Erot, it had all the hallmarks of Norway's thriving late '90s alternative music scene, taking inspiration from everything from Larry Levan disco productions to The Ramones whilst stealing a sample from Madonna's "Everybody." The song's contagious chorus made it a club hit from Paris to Stockholm to London. However, this blossoming singing and DJing career was painfully cut short when Erot died in 2001. Unable to face the world, Strand retreated from the scene she loved until she found the strength to go back to the clubs of her native Bergen.

Through DJing she met Finnish electro producer Timo who asked if she would consider putting vocals to his Opl: Bastards project. Soon they began work on what has become the core of Strand's debut LP, *Anniemal*. What's more, her label 679 made a canny choice for the album's producer: bootleg guru Richard X. Effortlessly combining disco, electronica, house, and pop it dexterously crosses the divide between commercial accessibility and a contemporary dynamic

edge. Despite turning down the likes of Britney Spears for remix work, fellow Norwegians Röyksopp dropped work on their new album to guest produce two tracks; adding further credibility are remixes for her "Heartbeat" single by Maurice Fulton and Alan Braxe.

The scene is now set for Annie to take her sound out on the road at key dates across Europe and the States. Whether she becomes the cool version of Kylie Minogue—name-checking the likes of Bjørn Torske, Kompakt, and the Tom Tom Club—remains to be seen. What is certain is that the marriage of Annie's captivating vocals to dance music is infectious enough to give the likes of Usher and Maroon 5 a run for their lame-ass money.

*Anniemal* is out now on 679 Records and will be out in the US in May on Big Beat/Atlantic.

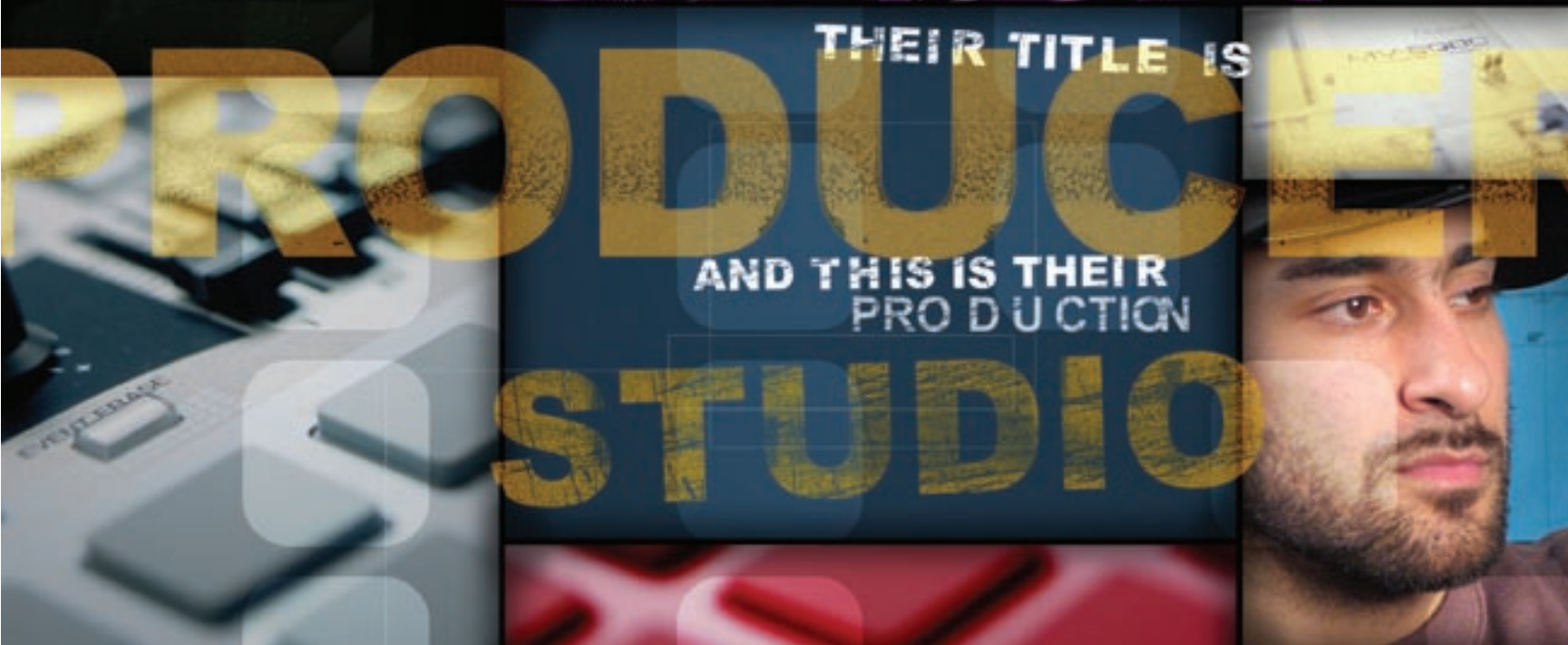
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**BUSDRIVER'S TOUR OF LA**  
 The Southland's most abstract MC drives you to his favorite chill spots.

Everyone knows Missing Persons' song "Nobody Walks In LA" is true. So if you come to town without a rental car you better get used to the bus. Who better to pull open the doors for you but cleverly sarcastic Regan Farquhar, better known by the name Busdriver. He's rapped alongside Freestyle Fellowship luminaries, mashed up on stage with Koncrete Junglists, and tuned in and dropped out with Dublab rats like Daedelus. After numerous guest appearances and four solid records of his own—his most recent, *Fear Of A Black Tangent*, is out now on Mush—Farquhar's ready to swipe your pass. *Daniel Siwek*  
[www.dirtyloop.com](http://www.dirtyloop.com)



**Project Blowed at The Kaos Network, 4343 Liemert Blvd.**

"I like to hang out at Project Blowed in Leimert Park. It's a very prestigious open mic, and on Thursdays I spend hours and hours there. The 210 passes by there, but that's on Crenshaw."  
*(Metro Bus 210, 710)*

**Psychobabble Café, 1866 N. Vermont St.**

"When I want a chai latte and a place to write my thoughts and people watch, I go to the Psychobabble Café on Vermont in Los Feliz. There's a bus stop on Vermont and Hollywood Blvd."  
*(204, 754, Metro Red Line Subway)*

**Amoeba Music, 6400 Sunset Blvd.**

"Now, as much as I want to fight it, I would probably go to Amoeba, mainly to talk to Subtitle and Thavius Beck [a.k.a. Adlib] to try to convince them they're going to be stars. Right there at Sunset and Vine."  
*(Metro Bus 2, 302)*

**Merkato Restaurant, 1036 S. Fairfax Blvd.**

"We're going to get hungry, so we'll head over to the Merkato Restaurant for some great Ethiopian finger food. It's on Fairfax between Pico and Olympic."  
*(Metro Bus 217, 317)*

**Temple Bar, 1026 Wilshire Blvd.**

"And when I'm ready to go out for the night and hang out with conscious black-college people, it's always the Temple Bar. There's always pretty girls, and you never know when you can run into the likes of King Britt. Corner of Wilshire and 11th St. in Santa Monica."  
*(Metro Bus 20, 720)*



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Supersystem (L-R): Justin Moyer, Josh Blair, Raphael Cohen, Pete Cafarella

# SUPERSYSTEM

FORMERLY EL GUAPO, THESE FOUR IGNITE BROOKLYN'S DANCE PUNK LANDSCAPE.

WORDS: JESSICA HOPPER PHOTO: ERIK LANG

It is debatable whether dance punk is dying, or whether dance punk's flag is just getting raised. Franz Ferdinand and Interpol are as ubiquitous as the phone bill, and there are many, many imitators praying to be floated to golden shores by the nu-disco tide. Then there is Supersystem, who you may remember by their recently retired moniker El Guapo.

The combo started life as avant noodlers who favored reed-instrument solos and free jazz awkwardness over the mid-to-late '90s Washington, DC hardcore sound. Nonetheless, after singles and a largely ignored debut on a small co-op label run by friends, the band signed with local punk stalwarts Dischord. Over the next few years, their sound and line-ups continually shifted. By the release of 2002's *Fake French*, the band was decidedly song-based and their album (produced by the heavy hand of Trans Am's Phil Manley) was laden with beeps, blips, and tumbling 4/4 cadences. Along the way, they added keyboardist Pete Cafarella (The Rapture), and half the quartet began biding time in Brooklyn, while the other half stayed rooted in DC.

After recent tours with The Rapture and Ted Leo, their tracks started showing up in Tommie Sunshine's playlists; and, while hounded by bigger, dance-oriented labels, the boys chose to sign with Touch and Go. But a Chicago bar band with a

Budweiser endorsement already trademarked their name of eight years. Letting go of El Guapo's past, the boys ushered in a new sound with a new name: Supersystem.

Supersystem's *Touch and Go* debut shows the band biting into a meatier, fuller style and ditching their snakey, fragmented free jazz ends all together. It's one of the first dance punk albums that is actually, well, *danceable*. The band comes from disparate grooming and inspirations: Cafarella from the school of booming 808s; co-frontman Justin Moyer from a strict diet of Elvis; drummer Josh Blair also plays in prog power metallists Orthrelm; and other frontman Raphael Cohen listens to Afro-Latin sounds "exclusively." Nonetheless, the band coheres into a fierce, funkified combo, showing their DC roots (think Trouble Funk, not Fugazi) all the way.

To listen to Moyer explain it, it's all happy accident: "We didn't plan on making an accessible dance album. All we set out to do was make something tighter. I think we just got sick of improvising—got tired of trying to 'blow peoples minds' with how out there we could get. It got boring. We realized there is absolutely nothing wrong with writing catchy songs with hooky choruses." Especially if you are Supersystem.

Supersystem's *Always Never Again* is out now on Touch and Go.  
www.touchandgorecords.com



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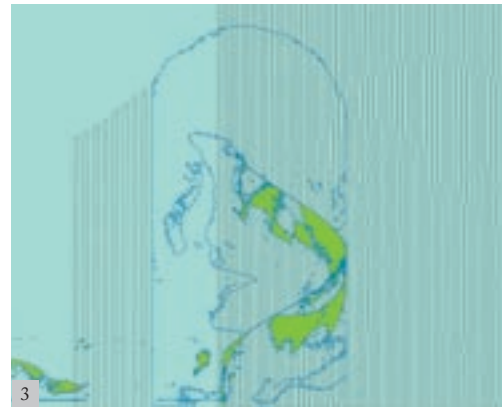
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## FREE SPIRIT

Freewave lets you dissect graphic design layer by layer.

Somewhere in the ivory tower of Adobe Illustrator, a once-famous graphic designer weeps, a tear-stained copy of *Freewave* (softcover; Abrams Books, \$40) in his hand. You see, whereas it was once possible for pixel pushers to get off on guarding their secrets, the dearth of up-and-coming fontmakers, vector lovers, and Photoshop freaks means that it's no longer tricks that separate the wheat from the chaff—it's raw talent. *Freewave*—a 260-page book with accompanying CD—is designed to help you exercise that talent. Over 100 artists have contributed fonts, photos, designs, and icons—and the CD contains all the files they're made up of. This allows you to see the process behind the designs, and it's all "freeware," meaning everything from Phunk Studio's skunk clip art to Boris Dworschak's bitchin' heavy metal typeface Master can be used completely copyright-free. *Vivian Host*

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# MACKA DIAMOND

THIS DIAMOND REALLY IS A GIRL'S BEST FRIEND.

WORDS: SARAH BENTLEY PHOTO: DEBBIE BRAGG

After 15 years struggling to bust into the dance-hall scene, 2004 saw deejay Macka Diamond reach the number one spot in Jamaica. Riding the Thriller riddim, Diamond dropped the hilarious track "Done A' Ready," a scathing ode to one-minute men. Beside the hit being a great personal achievement, she was the first female artist in four years to get a Jamaican number one.

Delivered with the kind of lackadaisical assurance only a mature lady could pull off, the track was the antithesis to the raw slackness or sing-songy styles Jamaica's other female deejays offer. "That tune bring me back to the people," says Macka. "Women like to hear woman speak out about situations. If you can do that in entertaining way, you have them."

Macka (Charmaine Monroe to her mum) has a dogged determination that has to be

admired. She started her career in her teens (she's now 30-something) as Lady Charm and did the rounds of Kingston's notoriously tough studios. She teamed up with ghetto star Queen Paula until an irrevocable fight split the pair. She briefly became part of Captain Barky's Worm Dem Crew before going solo and finding success with a counter tune to Major Mackerel's King Tubby-released "Don Ban;" this led to a producer pressuring her to adopt the name Lady Mackerel. "I was always looking for the right formula," says Macka, explaining her many guises. "When I was young I don't think I was ready to do it on my own. I've been in it so long now nothing phases me and I can just be myself."

2003 saw her announce another alias on "Tekk Con," a response to Vybz Kartel's "Tekk Buddy." Kartel loved it and asked her to perform

the track at his *Up 2 Di Time* album launch. With the majority of Jamaica's musical movers and shakers present, Macka stole the show, her years of experience warming up the hostile crowd and upstaging Kartel's stiff performance. It was this event that began Macka's meteoric rise to fame and secured her first ever solo album deal with UK reggae imprint Greensleeves; dancehalls are now ringing out with young ladies hollering her catch phrase "Money-O."

"Since 'Tekk Con' I've blown up," whispers Macka in a feminine tone that contrasts sharply with her no-nonsense deejay style. "There isn't a day when I not in studio, doing interviews or performing. It's what me always want."

Macka Diamond's LP will be out Summer 2005 on Greensleeves.  
www.greensleeves.net



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## SOMEWHERE: SEOUL, KOREA

Korean hip-hop artists bring it on without fear.

It's true—hip-hop has gone triple-platinum-global. Anywhere you go, from New York to Moscow, there's always an aspiring MC studying Eric B & Rakim's *Paid in Full*. So it's no surprise that hip-hop is the biggest selling music in a country that most folks can't even find in the atlas.

South Korea is famous for its *kim chi*, its Communist northern brethren, the War (1950-1953), and, more recently, hip-hop. And not that soft, diluted jazzy shit—hip-hop made on dusty Akai MPCs and E-Mu SP1200s with spinning rims and all the bling.

For a country the size of Indiana, Korea produces beats and rhymes as potent as those of their American counterparts. In 1992, a group called **Seo Taiji & Boys** stormed the charts, selling over 10 million records in Asia alone. Seo Taiji & Boys introduced Korea to a world of baggy jeans and Kangol hats, creating a cultural revolution that only Ice Cube's "Black Korea" could ironically have prophesized.

Album sales in Korea are surprisingly dominated by Korean artists. Names like **1Tym**, **Masta-Wu**, **Jinusean**, and **Drunken Tiger** all grace the Top 10 charts along with US heavyweights like Jay-Z and Eminem. Many Korean MCs are US expats who, born and raised in places like New York, Chicago, or LA's

Koreatown, embraced the music of their urban surroundings,

Due to their race, the chance of blowing up in the American hip-hop market is less than one MC Jin in a million. Instead, these young talents have worked on their "Konglish," moved back to the motherland, and become overnight popstars. Some even have the balls to ask key hip-hop players like Mobb Deep and Cypress Hill to make guest appearances on their records (most of which, sadly, two-thirds of the world will never get to hear).

If traveling 10,000 miles seems prohibitive, check out Drunken Tiger, Jinusean, Masta Wu, Lee Hyun Do, and Perry on the internet. And for the heads who get intimidated by foreign language, up-and-coming Korean-American MCs **Snacky Chan** and **Flowsik** rhyme in English and are sticking with their US passports, giving *106 and Park* freestyle champion and Ruff Ryder inductee Jin run for his money. Perhaps Korean MC superstar Jinusean says it best: "We're from Seoul, Korea/So what's the big idea?/Bringing hip-hop to the world, we got no fe-ahr." *Esta Park*

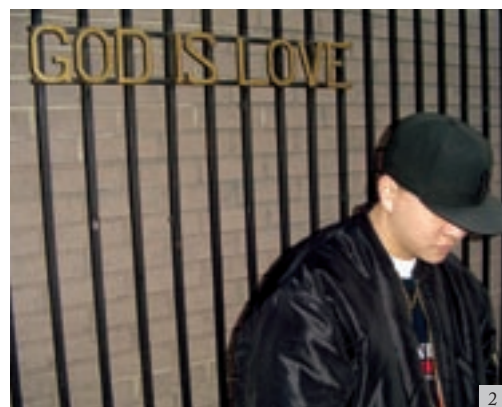
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1. Seoul at night; 2. Flowsik; 3. Drunken Tiger; 4. Snacky Chan; 5. Drunken Tiger



The first in a series of hard-to-find tracks debuting in digital form, featuring **Meat Beat Manifesto**, **Pal Joey**, **!!!**, **Circlesquare**, **Patrick Wolfe**, **Gavin Froome**, **Alex Smoke**, **Land Shark**, **Ulysses**, **Meikbar**, and more. Available exclusively through the iTunes Music Store. Original artwork by Nick Philip. [www.itunes.com](http://www.itunes.com)

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Monkey Maffia (left) and Robag Wruhme

# WIGHNOMY BROTHERS

FRACTURED, ALCOHOL-FUELED REMIXES PUT THIS EAST GERMAN TECHNO DUO ON THE MAP.

WORDS: PHILIP SHERBURNE ILLUSTRATION: JESSICA ROTTER

I'm guessing you've never heard of Jena, Germany. It's okay. I hadn't either, until I discovered the Wighnomy Brothers. But take a moment to locate it on the map—equidistant from Berlin and Frankfurt, it lies 100 miles or so west of Dresden, hovering perhaps 50 miles north of the Czech border. And take a good look at the cities nearby: Leipzig, Zwickau, Chemnitz. Why? Because the Wighnomy (pronounced “why-no-me”) Brothers, raised in the former East Germany, represent a generation of dance music that's moving east, away from established metropolitan centers like Frankfurt, Cologne, and Berlin and towards regions where dance music, once an unlikely import from faraway capitals, is beginning to mutate into unexpected new forms that are quickly filtering back to the center.

The Wighnomy Brothers—the duo of Robag Wruhme (birth name Gabor Schablitzki) and Monkey Maffia (a.k.a. Sören Bodner)—may not command enough English for an interview, but that hasn't held them back. Their meteoric rise is astonishing, first releasing deep house on their own

Freude Am Tanzen label, then launching the more mechanically inclined Musik Krause imprint, gigging routinely across Europe, and being tapped for remixes by everyone from Trüby Trio to Alter Ego, from Parisian label Tigersushi to Seattle's Orac.

The Wighnomys have yet to release a proper full-length, but their evolving style quickly becomes apparent from a survey of their singles and remixes. Expectedly minimalist—what German isn't?—they flesh out their herky-jerky tracks with wild syncopations remembered from their youth as Iron Curtain b-boys, keening pads culled from their deeper house origins, and hyperkinetic, almost Latin sensibilities akin to those of Luciano or Ricardo Villalobos.

Robag Wruhme currently enjoys the higher profile of the two, thanks to his well-regarded debut LP, *Wuzzlebud* “KK” (Musik Krause), and a slew of remixes for over a dozen labels, but don't discount the duo's cumulative clout. On their bootleg label W.B., they rework unlikely classics—Underworld, Kosheen, even Busta Rhymes—into drum-heavy workouts leavened with contemplative pads. And judging from an October appearance at Berlin nightclub Rosi's, their DJ sets are a model of collaborative synergy.

With each partner swilling separately from an upturned vodka bottle, one Brother manned the decks while the other hammered away at various effects boxes, turning a garden variety set of minimal techno into a relentless storm of echoes and loops. The louder the crowd screamed, the harder they played—and drank—returning again and again to the eerie acappella refrain “something for your mind.” They hardly needed to add the obvious: “...and your ass.” Welcome to the eastern frontier of booty.

Wighnomy Brothers' 3 *Fachmisch EP* (Freude Am Tanzen) and Robag Wruhme's *Stekkrüben EP* (Vakant) are out now. [www.wighnomy-brothers.de](http://www.wighnomy-brothers.de)

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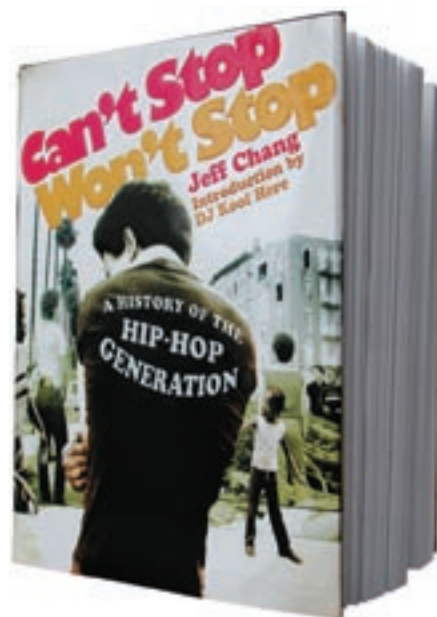


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On the block in the South Bronx with the ghetto Brothers and the Ronon Kings. Benji Melendez (center), Victor Melendez (right, on drums). Photo: 1976 © Librado Romero/New York Times Agency



Chang's book cover (above) and the photo introduction to chapter 3, entitled "Blood and Fire, with Occasional Music: The Gangs of the Bronx"

## HIP-HOP HISTORY LESSON

Jeff Chang's tome is a people's history of a musical revolution.

You may not be able to tell from mainstream media's bling saturation, but hip-hop was not birthed in the back of a Hummer. It was borne out of urban collapse and draconian cutbacks that reduced much of the Bronx to rubble. In that atmosphere DJs, MCs, b-boys, taggers, and gangbangers raged against the callousness of Carter and Reagan and turned it into a world-wide phenomenon.

Most of this probably floats beneath the dysfunctional radar of today's hip-hop community, but Solesides cofounder and hip-hop chronicler Jeff Chang is about to put an end to that with *Can't Stop Won't Stop: A History of the*

*Hip-Hop Generation* (hardcover; St. Martin's, \$27.95). "Like many of my generation," Chang confides, "I've hungered for stories that ring true. Hip-hop is full of those stories, so the book was just a way to say something deeper about who we are, what we want, and where we might go."

Chang's book digs deep into hip-hop's NYC roots and traces the genre's progress from soundsystem parties through high-art appropriations, race riots, gang clashes, and cross-country beefs in the name of lending the hip-hop nation some much-needed perspective.

"There's a desire in our generation to cir-

culate these hidden histories to keep hip-hop moving forward," says Chang. "Before hip-hop was globally consumed, it was a lived local culture. The hip-hop beamed today into houses and stores is just a sliver of the lived experience, although it sometimes seems that those passive acts—listening, watching, and purchasing—have come to stand in for the whole. I hope the grass-roots is able to take back control of hip-hop, and in the process take control of its own destiny."

*Scott Thill*

[www.cantstopwontstop.com](http://www.cantstopwontstop.com)

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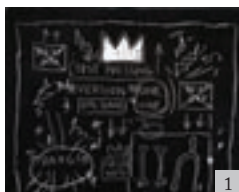


## INFLUENCES: DJ KAOS

Although his new album is punk funk, DJ Kaos is a b-boy at heart.

DJ, producer, and full-time freshmaker Kaos' latest album, *Hello Stranger*, on !K7 is an audacious escapade of classic disco, zappy acid, and sleazy rock tailor-made for druggy dance parties. But before dropping solo dance gems, Kaos was a member of Berlin hip-hop mainstays Terranova and freaky psych-funk duo Ghost Cauldron, not to mention a celebrated graffiti artist. With his penchant for trunk bumps and fat caps, we decided to track down the aptly-named dude in his Milan hotel room and had him break down his top five hip-hop records, old and new. Stephen Christian KAOS's *Hello Stranger* is out now on !K7. [www.k7.com](http://www.k7.com)

- 1. K-Rob & Rammellzee "Beat Bop" (Tartown)** "The way it's put together, the vibe...you don't hear stuff like that now. I did some beats for Rammellzee's new album for Gomma."
- 2. Double D & Steinski (shown) "The Lesson 3" (Tommy Boy)** "I was always really crazy about the cut-up style of that track."
- 3. DJ Shadow "Organ Donor" (Mo' Wax)** "This is the one with the Giorgio Moroder sample. I love it."
- 4. Snoop Dogg feat. Pharrell "Drop It Like It's Hot" (Geffen)** "I have to include this one for some West Coast flavor. Such a crazy electronic beat."
- 5. Aaliyah "One In A Million" (Virgin)** "This is a crazy groove. It has an acid bassline! A great, twisted song that sounds amazing in a club."



## NEXT BIG THING: JUSTIN MARTIN

A young San Francisco house producer lives the dream.

Go to Miami's Winter Music Conference and you'll return with hundreds of promo CD-Rs. Most end up as drink coasters, but a few find a receptive ear—just ask Justin Martin, whose "Sad Piano" was passed out at WMC 2003 and went home with Buzzin' Fly's Ben Watt. "I thought it was a joke at first [when Watt got in touch]," says Martin. "But he's totally taken me under his wing and helped me out."

Buzzin' Fly released "Sad Piano" (made only a few months after buying a computer), and Martin followed with guest DJ gigs in London and subsequent releases for Classic, Utensil, and Roam. His upcoming productions

with Sammy Dee for new San Francisco label Dirty Bird, which match sure-footed grooves with perverse samples and grainy synths, bring further goofy, inventive fun to the house dancefloor. His productions are refreshingly raw, reflecting tastes cultivated at the Lower Haight's now-defunct DJ dive bar The Top. Says Martin, "I like sounds that jump out at you and make you go, 'What the hell was that?'" *Peter Nicholson*  
[www.rookrecords.com](http://www.rookrecords.com)



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**MUSIC a.m.**  
*My City Glittered Like A Breaking Wave* CD

Latest excursion from the London/Düsseldorf trio continues to create cascading delicate sonorities over shifting topographies. Slo-bio countrified vibes, methadone doo-wop for disco misfits and swan songs for ex-swingers, are set light by deep blue bass chords, whispering whirlpools of guitar and burbling micro funk. (Quatermass)

**MATHIAS SCHAFFHÄUSER**  
*Coincidence* CD/2LP

You have no chance but Coincidence. From minimal to prime time rockers and back to Cologne. And always remember: "Truth ain't got no sound, only life is yelling loud."

**JUSTUS KÖHNCKE**  
*Doppelleben* CD/LP

Listed by Pitchfork Media in their top five to watch for in 2005, Köhncke steps up combining Kompakt's techno message with the best of disco's last three decades. Who said that computer music sounds cold?

**JAY HAZE**  
*Love For A Strange World* CD/3LP

Love for a strange world isn't an album that hugs the listener and aspirates sweet little messages. It is a personal statement in an electronic music format, which impressively displays in its atmospheric tracks, the rotting condition of our world and the sickness of mankind. Definitely an intense affair and another reason why Haze is named with artists like Hawtin, Villalobos or the Perlon Crew.

**PRINCIPLES OF GEOMETRY**  
*Principles of Geometry* CD

Principles of Geometry carry high the beacon of electronica renaissance. An emotional trip throughout the halcyon days of American pop-culture when man, cinema, nature and music could still be one. (Tigersushi)

**THE TAPE vs. ROM**  
*Autoreverse* 2LP/CD

Autoreverse is the second album of The Tape. Leaving the paths of Hip Hop Purism they deliver a stunning soulful and emotional Hip Hop/Downbeat album, loaded with melodies and hooks and lyrics we have been looking so desperately for the past years. AWESOME and definitely not to be missed!

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Last year a track from Japan found a home abroad in the playlists of DJs as disparate as Derrick May and Kenny Dope—Jazztronik's "Samurai," released on Neil Aline's Chez imprint. A stunning marriage of jazz grand piano and rough broken beats, "Samurai" won the expected fans—like Gilles Peterson's Worldwide audience—but also unusual acclaim from producers like Jazzy Jeff, who included it in his house mix album for Defected. Not too shabby for a track with decidedly humble origins.

"The piano phrase in the track comes from a warm-up practice melody I use for my fingers," explains 28-year-old Ryota Nozaki via email from his home in central Tokyo. "All I did was to keep that melody and add some drum programming." A typically unassuming response from Nozaki, but one that belies the banging energy packed by his particular mix of jazz and electronics. While so many producers are content to mine jazz records for key hooks that drive their songs, Nozaki's productions show a more natural integration, a fluency borne of years of both classical and modern training.

Nozaki was first motivated to make his own music by fellow countrymen Yellow Magic Orchestra and Ryuichi Sakamoto, but he found inspiration for his rolling key style from players like George Duke. With his Jazztronik guise first appearing on essential Japanese label Flower, Nozaki has gone on to release a half dozen albums and remix the likes of Modaji and Fertile Ground.

Nozaki's new album, also titled *Samurai* (Pantone), carries through on the promise of the single with songs like "Arabesque," which pairs crunchy beats with staccato strings and kaleidoscopic turns at the keys, and "Nana," a driving bossa jam. Though a few of *Samurai*'s tracks, like the techno homage to Detroit "Phoenix," are credited only to Nozaki, the entire album features half a dozen instrumentalists ranging from multiple violinists to a cellist and flutist. And these aren't just studio players, they've performed on stage with Jazztronik. "We've done many gigs in Japan," Nozaki elaborates. "The response of the audience has been really positive which is very inspiring for me as a musician and producer."

So what does this busy producer and performer really get excited about? "Would you believe me if I told you it was record shopping? I have some great second-hand record stores close to my place in Tokyo and I love digging for records and discovering new sounds and styles."

*Samurai* is out now on Pantone. [www.jazztronik.com](http://www.jazztronik.com)

## JAZZTRONIK

A PIANO SAMURAI WHOSE ORCHESTRAL BROKEN BEATS ARE A CUT ABOVE.

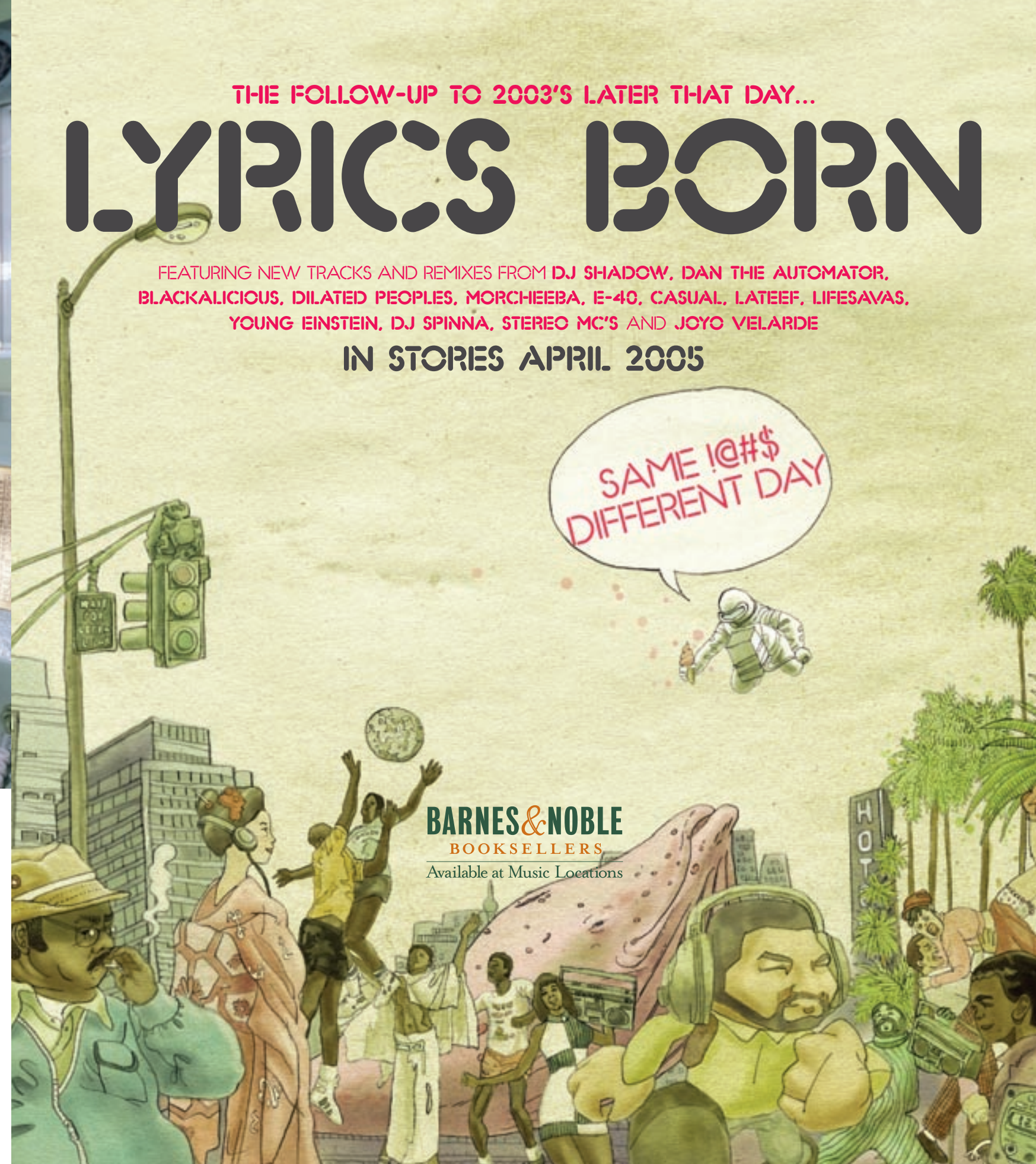
WORDS: PETER NICHOLSON PHOTO: SHIGERU TOYAMA

THE FOLLOW-UP TO 2003'S LATER THAT DAY...

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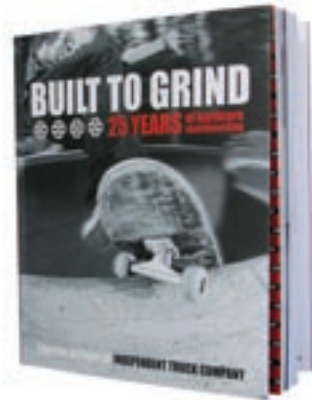
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## KEEP ON TRUCKING

A quarter century of skateboarding is slashed open in Independent's new book.

The mid-'70s were a strange time; that much is for sure. The ugly specters of Nixon and Vietnam were looming over Washington, DC, some dirty street kids called The Ramones were making noise in NYC's Bowery, and up in NorCal a pair of motorcycle mechanics were tinkering with skateboard trucks under the name Independent.

**Built to Grind** (softcover; Independent Truck Company, \$34.95) is the story, in the words of company insiders and the photos of Bryce Kanights, Tobin Yelland, Gabe Morford, Tod Swank, and a host of others, of Independent Truck Company and its uncanny rise to domination. It is the stuff of legend—a ragtag gang of drunks and weirdos hook up over a shared love of skateboarding, shaping, and molding steel in a Hunter's Point warehouse deep in industrial San Francisco

and begin testing their new product in the bowls and parking lots of Santa Cruz, San Jose, and Long Beach.

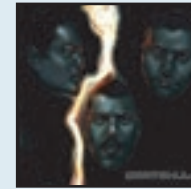
*Built to Grind* is a celebration of 25 long, strange years in the skateboarding world, and by far the most impressive archive of photos and lore yet assembled of its culture and importance. Anyone who's ever mattered has ridden Independent trucks—Steve Alba, Tommy Guerrero, Christian Hosoi, and Camden Scott have all worn the company's iron cross logo with pride. As the young filmmaker/skater Satva Leung says, "Nothing else compares to the way Indys turn and grind. Indys are the best trucks, plain and simple." *Toph One*

[www.independenttrucks.com](http://www.independenttrucks.com)



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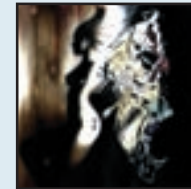
## AVAILABLE NOW



### GRAYSKUL - DEADLIVERS - CD & 2LP

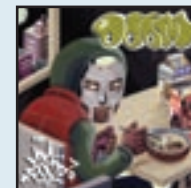
Onry Ozzborn & JFK of Seattle's Old Dominion, along with bass player Rob Castro are Grayskul. *Deadlivers*, the dark debut full-length from Grayskul, features guest appearances by Canibus, Aesop Rock, Mr. Lif, Abstract Rude, FAKTS One and others.

GRAYSKUL - PROM QUIZ b/w CURSIVE feat. Mr. Lif - 12" Single



### ATMOSPHERE - HEADSHOTS: SEVEN - CD & 3LP

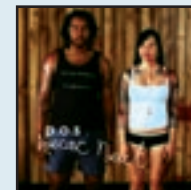
For the first time on cd & vinyl, volume 7 of the infamous Rhymesayers Headshots 4track cassette series. 21 tracks from Slug and Ant recorded between *Overcast!* and *Lucy Ford*. Digitally remastered and repackaged with a Free bonus *Headshots Best Of* disc, (*Initial CD Pressing Only*) featuring rare tracks from other Headshots volumes.



### MF DOOM - MM..FOOD - CD & 2LP

The masked man behind Madvillain, Viktor Vaughn and King Geedorah returns with the highly anticipated follow-up to the independent classic, *Operation: Domsday*. Produced by the Metal Fingered Villain, MM..Food features guest appearances by Madlib, Count Bass D, Mr. Fantastik and more.

MF DOOM - HOE CAKES b/w POTHOLDERZ feat. Count Bass D - 12" Single



### P.O.S. - IPECAC NEAT - CD

The debut album from P.O.S., Doomtree frontman and newest addition to the Rhymesayers roster. *Ipecac Neat* fuses together the angst, sincerity and spirit of Punk with the bass, wit and lyricism of underground Hip Hop.

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- FELT (SLUG/MURS/ANT) - A TRIBUTE TO \_\_\_\_\_ - CD/LP
- BOOM BAP PROJECT - REPROGRAM - CD/LP
- PSALM ONE - THE DEATH OF FREQUENT FLYER - CD/LP
- ANT - MELODIES AND MEMORIES VOL.2 ('85-'89) - CD
- JOHN ROBINSON - WHO THE F!#K IS JOHN ROBINSON - CD/LP
- ATMOSPHERE - YOU CAN'T IMAGINE HOW MUCH FUN WE'RE HAVING - CD/LP
- P.O.S. - AUDITION - CD/LP
- BROTHER ALI - THE UNDISPUTED TRUTH - CD/LP
- MAC LETHAL - 11:11 - CD/LP

CATCH ATMOSPHERE, GRAYSKUL & P.O.S. ON TOUR For more information: [www.rhymesayers.com](http://www.rhymesayers.com) / [www.myspace.com/rhymesayers](http://www.myspace.com/rhymesayers)

3/01- Madison, WI @ Luther's	3/22- Birmingham, AL @ Zydco	4/12- Eugene, OR @ WOW Hall
3/02- Champaign, IL @ High Dive	3/23- Atlanta, GA @ Drunken Unicorn	4/13- Portland, OR @ Roseland Theatre
3/03- Bloomington, IN @ Rhinos	3/24- Gainesville, FL @ Common Grounds	4/14- Seattle, WA @ Neumos
3/04- Ann Arbor, MI @ Blind Pig	3/25- Orlando, FL @ Social	4/15- Missoula, MT @ The Other Side
3/05- Columbus, OH @ Little Brothers	3/26- St. Petersburg, FL @ State Theatre	4/16- Boise, ID @ JD'S
3/06- Louisville, KY @ Headliners Music Hall	3/27- New Orleans, LA @ HOB/The Parish	4/17- Salt Lake City, UT @ Club Sound
3/07- Cleveland, OH @ Grog Shop	3/28- Austin, TX @ Emo's	4/18- Boulder, CO @ Fox Theatre (SOLD OUT)
3/09- Burlington, VT @ Higher Ground	3/30- Denton, TX @ Hailey's	4/20- Denver, CO @ Gothic Theatre
3/10- Portland, ME @ Space Gallery	3/31- Albuquerque, NM @ Launchpad	4/22- Omaha, NE @ Sokol Underground
3/11- Providence, RI @ Living Room	4/01- Tucson, AZ @ Club Congress	4/23- St. Louis, MO @ Creepy Crawl
3/12- Cambridge, MA @ Middle East-Downstairs	4/02- Phoenix, AZ @ Old Brickhouse	4/24- Chicago, IL @ Abbey Pub
3/13- New York, NY @ Bowery Ballroom	4/03- Las Vegas, NV @ Roadhouse	4/25- Chicago, IL @ Empty Bottle
3/15- Philadelphia, PA @ First Unitarian Church	4/05- San Diego, CA @ Epicentre	4/26- Iowa City, IA @ Gabe's Oasis
3/16- Baltimore, MD @ Otobar	4/06- Los Angeles, CA @ Troubadour (SOLD OUT)	4/27- Sioux Falls, SD @ Oaks Convention Center
3/17- Washington, DC @ 9:30 Club	4/07- Los Angeles, CA @ Troubadour (SOLD OUT)	4/29- Duluth, MN @ Luce
3/18- Richmond, VA @ Nanci Raygun	4/08- Pomona, CA @ Glass House	4/30- Minneapolis, MN @ First Ave.
3/19- Carboro, NC @ Cat's Cradle	4/09- San Francisco, CA @ Slims	5/01- Minneapolis, MN @ First Ave.
3/20- Nashville, TN @ Exit In	4/10- San Francisco, CA @ Bottom of the Hill	

## BLUEPRINT:1988

The debut solo album from Blueprint, Weightless frontman & half of Ohio dynamic duo Soul Position. Featuring guest appearances by Aesop Rock & CJ the Cyonic, *1988* pays homage to the beats, breaks and themes of possibly the most revered year in Hip Hop... '88!

## IN STORES 3.29.05

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## DUB POET VISION

Linton Kwesi Johnson's reggae poetry raises its fist.

London-based reggae artist and political poet Linton Kwesi Johnson's 1993 concert, given to a packed house at Paris' massive Zenith stadium, was filmed to mark the 25th anniversary of his recording career. Bassist Dennis Bovell's Dub Band served as an enthralling and powerful backdrop for Johnson's incendiary, politically motivated verse. On the new DVD, *Linton Kwesi Johnson: Live in Paris with the Dennis Bovell Dub Band* (LKJ Records [UK]/Wrasse [France], \$19.99), multi-angled camerawork affords a good sense of the role each individual contributes to the musical mix. Johnson leads us through the highlights of his 10-album career, rendering every track a robust blast from his canon and occasionally interjecting pertinent commentary to relate older works to contemporary troubles; a particularly revealing interview, marred only slightly by background noise, is an additional plus. *David Katz*

[www.wrasserecords.com](http://www.wrasserecords.com)



## DOPE EXCALIBUR

Lyrical Swords demystifies hip-hop politics and philosophy.



Recent books on hip-hop and politics, like Jeff Chang's *Cant Stop Won't Stop* and Bakari Kitwana's *The Hip-Hop Generation*, have delved deep into socioeconomics and policy issues, yet Adisa Banjoko walks the path less traveled on *Lyrical Swords: Hip-Hop and Politics in the Mix* (softcover; YinSumi Press, \$15). Rather than pimp slapping you upside the head with statistics and historical research, Banjoko takes an almost-conversational approach, which makes his book a far less intimidating (yet no less intellectually brilliant) read; it's much closer to the *Book of Five Rings* than *The Prince*. Banjoko brings in one of the culture's often-overlooked elements—spirituality—by placing just as much importance on Shaolin monks like Shi Yan Ming as rappers like Q-Tip and Paris. Banjoko offers much food for thought, reminding readers that the hip-hop experience is as much a personal journey as a generational movement. *Eric K. Arnold*

[www.lyricalswords.com](http://www.lyricalswords.com)



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Suggestive Themes



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SPIN CYCLE

News and gossip from the music world

Pro-skateboard legend **Natas Kaupas**'s new company **Designarium** recently had artists including **Thomas Campbell**, **Shepard Fairey** (OBEY), **Marok**, and Paige Imatani redesign his original Santa Monica Airlines panther deck. **Metatronix Recordings'** West Coast US tour jumps off early May 2005 with live ragga/d&b and glitch-hop hybrid sets from **Supersoul**, MC Stres, Judah Mason, Diamond Ice, and **Eliot Lipp**. **Broadway Project**'s new album, entitled *The Vessel*, is out April 12th on Doubling Cube! [www.broadwayproject.co.uk](http://www.broadwayproject.co.uk) LA's **DJ Santo** of Soulphonic Soundsystem serves up great future jazz and broken beat radio at [www.live365.com/stations/soulphonicsound](http://www.live365.com/stations/soulphonicsound). Also rated for online jazz listening: Germany's **Department Deluxe**: [radio.department-deluxe.org](http://radio.department-deluxe.org). Art and music company **Arctokyo** teams with clubs and promoters to bring great music to Japan. **John Tejada** and **John Selway** recently performed there. Check [www.arctokyo.com](http://www.arctokyo.com). *Mr. Fix It* is back! Legendary Studio One vocalist **Winston Francis** sees his *Mr. Fix It* album lovingly reissued on the UK's **Jet Star Phonographics** with 24 vintage tracks, including his cover of the '60s psych-pop classic "California Dreaming." **Laurent Garnier** canceled a recent US tour due to excessively strict visitation policies. Garnier explained in a statement that US Customs (a division of the Department of Homeland Security) required him to have a US Embassy interview, show proof of ownership of his house, bank account details, **mobile phone records**, and share family members' personal information. On June 18, Brooklyn Brewery, promotions company Room Service, and hip-hop label **Seven Heads** present the **Brooklyn Hip-Hop Festival** in the heart of Williamsburg—a full day of live hip-hop, funk, and soul performances. Art magazine **Loyal**

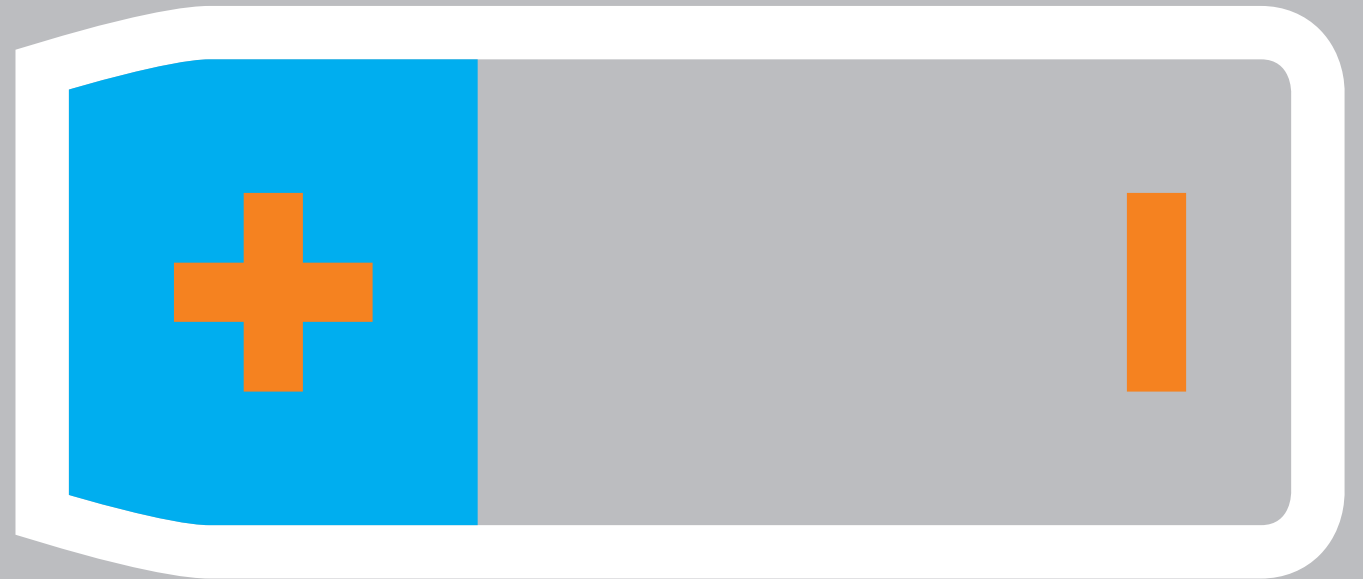


opened its own art gallery in February in the Vasatan district Stockholm, Sweden with a premiere show by Bay Area-based artist **Chris Lindig**. Kompakt's techno boy **DJ Koze** drops his debut studio album in May and **Mark LeClair** (a.k.a. Akufen) delivers *Musique Pour 3 Femmes Enceinte* on Montreal's **Mutek Recordings** April 19. Roots reggae vocal stars **Warrior King** and **Jah Cure** both have new albums, *Hold The Faith* and *Freedom Blues* respectively, on VP in May. Also, find ill dancehall mixes and info at [www.selectaz.com](http://www.selectaz.com). The making of the greatest hip-hop record ever—**Public Enemy's** *It Takes A Nation of Millions To Hold Us Back*—was discussed by a panel including Harry Allen, Jon Caramanica, Jeff Chang, **Chuck D**, Glen E. Friedman, Nelson George, **Chairman Mao**, and **Hank and Keith Shocklee** on February 25 and 26 at The Clive Davis Department of Recorded Music at NYU. What do new releases by Bugz In The Attic, A Bossa Electric, Square One, Domu, Dego, and Nubian Mindz have in common? You can find out about them first by signing up for **Goya Distribution's** weekly update at [www.goyamusic.com](http://www.goyamusic.com). The acid house story continues to unfold with new spring reissues on Trax **Classix** by **Farley "Jackmaster" Funk**, **Armando**, and **Joey Beltram**. **Quannum Projects** expands their roster with 2005 signings like the SF trio Honeycut, Brazil's Curumin, and LA Symphony's **Pigeon John**. [www.quannum.com](http://www.quannum.com) Nu-metal was censored in Los Angeles when The Forum stadium in Los Angeles, owned by The Faithful Central Bible Church, decided to ban **Lamb of God's** performance at their venue. London's **Amalgamation of Soundz** celebrates 10 years of making killer melodic tracks and their 70-plus releases for labels like Filter, Tru Thoughts, Slip n Slide, Bluenote, and Earth Project with a tour of North America this summer. Visiting Paris? Stop by **Q-Tape's** monthly night *Sure Shot* at 109 Rue Oberkampf. Daniel Wang played in March, and previous guests have included Compost's Florian Keller, Balastic Brother **Ashley Beedle**, and Jazz Room's **Russ Dewburry**. More details at [www.q-tape.com](http://www.q-tape.com). We folks in San Francisco proclaim: Summer of Love 2005 is officially on!



1. DJ Koze; 2. *Loyal* #9 with cover by Chris Lindig; 3. Q-Tape flyer for Daniel Wang's appearance; 4. Pigeon John; 5. Lamb of God; 6. Warrior King's *Hold The Faith* cover

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# THRILL

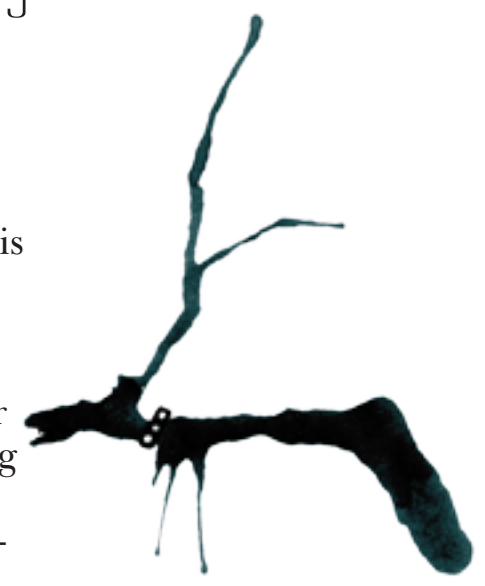
seeker

Ellen Allien—DJ, producer, Bpitch Control label owner—talks about time, space, and her love affair with emotive techno.

WORDS: JULIANNE SHEPHERD ORIGINAL PHOTOS: FLORIAN KOLMER  
ILLUSTRATIONS: STEFFI+STEFFI



"I was always on the search for something that creates a thrill."



As a kid, Ellen Allien idolized David Bowie. She learned his pop star language—the art of reinvention—early on. More explicitly, he taught her English: “My teacher said we should begin learning English from the translation of our favorite band texts. Bowie was thereby the first pop star for me. He has enchanted me because of his constantly slipping into other roles.” Not surprisingly, Allien is probably the closest person techno boasts to Bowie—an ambitious innovator and powerhouse, she shapeshifts nearly as often as she packs a crate of twelves and jumps on a red-eye.

An internationally renowned producer, DJ, independent label head, and soon-to-be fashion ingénue (she’s starting a line called Thrills), Ellen Allien is a pop star for the post-millennium. She’s also visually unforgettable: her album covers depict a fierce, intelligent lady lording over imaginary computer landscapes, and they’re often analogies for what’s going on inside. Her last album, *Berlinette*—designed by Berlin collective Pfadfinderei—showed her fixing a steely gaze skyward; the record explored being a native of Berlin and a citizen the world. The cover of her third full-length, *Thrills* (released in Europe in May), shows a two-headed Ellen Allien (realized by Steffi+Steffi) whipping her hair all around, free, while a mini Ellen peeps out from under her armpit. Clearly, *Thrills* is a philosophical record about self-discovery, an exploratory mission of uncharted internal landscapes—perhaps Allien’s version of *Ziggy Stardust*? “I am still on the search for me,” she explains. “Meanwhile my self-definition comes, to a large extent, from my work [and] my creative output. That also means discovering new in old and [vice versa]—like Bowie does and did.”

#### GROWING UP ALLIEN

Allien grew up with her mother in West Berlin. “I learned to play flute,” she says, referencing her musical background, “and in the corridor of our flat stood a small organ, on which I always hammered wildly. But I lost making music over the years until I was 19. Then I tried out all possibilities; I had a practice area, where I played drums and saxophone. I [did] that for three years, until I noticed something else was happening. When I bought my first vinyl, my saxophone sunk into dust.” Living with her boyfriend in a squat on Berlin’s Westside, she became addicted to mixing. Luckily, her “hobby” jumped off around the time techno was really starting to pick up in the ‘90s—just about the time she was getting bored of Berlin’s chauvinist hip-hop scene. “The main reason I moved from hip-hop to techno [was] it was the first time that [sex] really played no role [in the scene]—whether you are man or

woman, whom you love, the way you love, why you are doing it,” she explains. “The only thing which counts is the love for the music, and thus a special [bond] of respect and friendship is created.”

This bond forms the *modus operandi* of Bpitch Control, the label she founded in 1999. It’s one of the more successful independent labels in Berlin, releasing a host of boundary-pushing techno, electro, and breaks by European producers like Sascha Funke, Smash TV, and Sylvie Marks, but it’s structured like a family. She and Funke listen to all the demos together and release albums by consensus—it’s less a collection of employees than a group of friends collaborating on an art project. No doubt her new Bpitch offshoot, Memo, will operate in the same way.

Bpitch’s mentality derives quite a bit of influence from the collectivity of Berlin counterculture. The label’s offices—comprised of two simple, loft-like rooms in an old building on Oranienberger Strasse—even have the air of a squat, albeit one with a lot of records. “I lived five years in an occupied house [squat],” Allien explains. “The exercise area [practice space] was in the cellar, the studio in the dwelling, and a Brazilian cultural center was on the ground floor. That was the first time my life that I could out-rave myself in an artistic and social way.” Though Allien has moved on, she holds on to the ideals of the underground. “We are all a



“I just love melancholic music.”

little bit similar to street kids at Bpitch,” she says in her press materials, and she’s quick to clarify: “This refers to the fact that we are always out on the streets, on the roads of life. We carry the key around our necks so we can decide for ourselves when and where to return.”

**HEARTCORE**

As if an extension of Allien’s street-wise philosophy, Bpitch albums share the trait of being incredibly human. Beneath all the floor-pounding synth rhythms is always the frisson of vulnerability, even among Kiki’s Bauhausian grumbings and agoraphobic beat snapping. Allien’s affection for great melodies undoubtedly affects what artists she chooses as much as it does her own work.

Melody was the real grabber on *Berlinette*; with its glitchy breakbeats gracefully layered with swathes of guitar, synth, and vocals and its discernible hooks, it was as much a pop album as a dance one. “*Berlinette* tried to integrate my inspirations and influences from other people, nations and musicians,” Allien explains. “It had noisy, experimental elements and poppy, ravey melodies. *Thrills* is so much clearer in contrast to it. I found a way to concentrate on me. Now depth, fat basslines, clear beats, electro, and techno are simply merging.”

Allien says it was necessary to do some personal rejiggering to get into the mood to make *Thrills*. “In January [2004], I canceled all gigs and went instead to the studio each day,” she explains. “It is such a beautiful feeling from my ‘on the go’ life to return from traveling and DJing and so many humans around me to make music, to finally get out the ideas which accumulated themselves in my head in the course of time.”

*Thrills* presents another side of Allien, one more in touch with “elechtech”—the moniker she’s given her own music. Bookmarked by the

deep sound of her new keyboard, an analog Arp 2600, *Thrills* is a dark, heavy, and isolated-sounding sojourn into the impermanence of self and time. “*Future is dust/flesh makes me blind*,” she sings, the vocals ground down and heavily processed to sound like the voice inside her head. “*Don’t break me down*” she implores on “Down,” as a chorus of snipped-apart breaths crest over cable-shock twitches of electro.

“[The darkness on this record] is not [meant to represent] emotional darkness,” she explains. “It’s the opposite. I just love melancholic music, it eases me...but the mourning I feel over the destruction of our world flows into my work and my music. The political situation is a drama for me; the history of mankind consists only of violence and wars. Nuclear policy, Bush, and [all] the prohibitions make me sick.”

**GETTING HER KICKS**

Though influenced by global living and the precarious nature of our planet, *Thrills* is an album about Allien more than any of her past works; there’s practically Buddhism behind its laser breaks and ping-pong sequencing. It’s full of self-reflection, allusions to a dual-self, and wire-tight production and EQing (thanks to Smash TV). It’s less obvious and immediately compelling than *Berlinette*, but much deeper, the sound of a woman taking stock of her accomplishments and unpacking who she’s become. “It’s a journey of the head into the heart, an ‘emo wave,’” she affirms.

“Music is my isle and my wave at the same time,” she professes. “I was always on the search for something that creates a thrill,” says Allien, “and it’s completely simple: it’s music!”

Ellen Allien’s *Thrills* is out in May on Bpitch Control. [www.bpitchcontrol.de](http://www.bpitchcontrol.de)

ON PITCH: FOUR BPITCH ARTISTS SOUND OFF ON THEIR FEARLESS LEADER



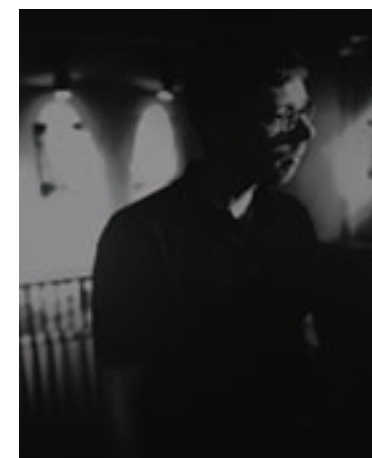
**SASCHA FUNKE**

“As a producer, Ellen’s music is surprising, never standing still and never sounding the same—it’s constant musical change. And it’s always interesting [working with Ellen]. She’s not only the Bpitch boss, but also a good friend; our constant musical exchange is very important.”



**KIKI**

“We first met in a club in Berlin when we were accidentally booked at the same time. We ended up playing back to back for six hours! It involved a lot of fun and vodka, which gave me the name for my first release on Bpitch, “Vodka Lime.” [Ellen has] the guts to try new things and to push things forward, and actually makes it all work on a big scale.”



**TOMAS ANDERSSON**

“I really like Bpitch’s open-minded, across-the-board approach to music. It’s not like other labels, where every record sounds more or less the same regardless of who made it.”



**FEADZ**

“[Ellen puts] a big touch of sensitivity into this dancefloor shit!”

# say ANYTHING

Bi-coastal dancefloor detonators  
Out Hud get cozy...with words.  
WORDS: JESSE SERWER PHOTOS: JESSICA MILLER  
CLOTHING: AMERICAN APPAREL CUSTOMIZED BY OUT HUD



“There is more behind  
it than just, like, ‘Dance!’”

—Molly Schnick

Rumors abound about Out Hud. That they have a drum machine named Phyllis. That they changed their name to !!! when they got signed to Warp Records. Whether it’s their perpetual instrument-swapping or certain associates’ membership in the seven-piece punk-dance outfit !!!, people just can’t seem to get their facts straight when talking about these New York-via-Cali dub ‘n’ dancefloor deconstructionists.

“It is hard, for some reason, for people to understand what’s going on with us,” concurs Phyllis Forbes, who is not a drum machine but a living, breathing 26-year-old woman who has handled keyboards/piano, bass, drums, and drum programming (among other duties) since co-founding the band in Sacramento back in 1996. “People must make up shit—they can’t have read us saying this stuff anywhere.”

The confusion should all be ending right about...now, especially since Out Hud’s second LP, *Let Us Never Speak of It Again*, is a bit of a coming out party for Forbes and cellist Molly Schnick, who together have assumed vocal duties within the group many people assumed was “!!!’s instrumental sister act.” (The lineup is rounded out by !!!-ers Justin Vandervolgen and Nic Offer; LCD Soundsystem guitarist and !!! member Tyler Pope recently departed the band).

“The first 7” record that we did back in 1998 had vocals on it and so did a lot of our early songs that we never recorded,” clarifies Schnick, the squeaky, high-pitched voice backing up Forbes on tracks like “It’s For You” and “The Stoked American.” “So we never really thought of ourselves as an instrumental band, even though maybe we were.”

“It wasn’t a conscious thing,” Forbes interjects. “I guess we just didn’t have anything to say.”

#### MORE RAWK, MORE TALK

With its cheeky, in-joke-derived song titles (“Old Nude,” “Dear Mr. Bush, There Are Over 100 Words For Shit and Only 1 For Music. Fuck You. Out Hud”) and somber, dark tones, it may not be too clear what Out Hud is saying on *Let Us Never Speak of It Again*. Whatever it is, it sounds damn sharp. Full of complex rhythms, richly layered sound textures, and flawlessly subtle transitions that lead toward unexpected heights, nearly every track teeters the brink between danceable and melancholy, funky, and sad. Buoyed by Justin Vandervolgen’s wholly underrated mixing skills—he also plays the role of dubmaster live, mixing the band’s instrumental output with the intensity of an Adrian

Sherwood or Mad Professor—the girls’ vocals sound vibrant, upbeat, and very much a part of the music, providing a pop edge that builds significantly upon the dubby remoteness of 2002’s *S.T.R.E.E.T.D.A.D.*

“Listening to these new songs I do feel they are more accessible,” Schnick says. “You can sing along, and I like that. It is a darker record than we thought it would be. People have asked, ‘Do you want this to be a dance record?’ We didn’t have an agenda going into it. There is more behind it than just, like, ‘Dance!’”

It would be misleading to say that there aren’t distinctive traces of New Order, Dub Syndicate, and even the Tom Tom Club in the Out Hud mix, but unlike most of the other bands working their way out of, or into, the post-punk tag these days, there is little looking backward on *Let Us Never Speak of It Again*.

“I was really psyched when all of the tasteful, progressive tech-house stuff started coming out, even though our music sounds nothing like that,” Vandervolgen admits. “It is much easier for people to get into an aesthetic that has already been established. Everyone is always wanting to be able to say, ‘It sounds like this’ because it makes things easier. But I would be psyched if somebody told me this sounds like a lot of things but not really like anything.”

#### THE BAND THAT STAYS TOGETHER, PLAYS TOGETHER

Over coffee at a Williamsburg pastry shop, Forbes and Schnick reveal a habit of finishing each other’s sentences—which makes sense seeing as they’ve known each other since elementary school. Out Hud is the women’s third band together, and they’ve been playing together consistently since the age of 13, when they started Raouul, a short-lived, three-chord punk band that nonetheless managed to put a 7” EP out on the influential Lookout! Records. During the course of the interview, Forbes, who briefly dated Offer nearly a decade ago, reveals a “bombshell” that might prove an online description of Out Hud as a “post-punk Fleetwood Mac” to be at least somewhat true: she’s begun dating Vandervolgen, her best friend of nearly a decade.



For some reason, though, it doesn't seem likely that this newfound love will erode the band's internal vibe, which is still very much typified by humor and a punk rock approach to things. Forbes willingly gives an example of the band's California hijinks, which have only intensified over the years. "Once we made up a love triangle between me, Molly, and Nic to get onto the *Mark Wahlberg Show*," Forbes recalls. "Not Marky Mark, but the *Temptation Island* guy—he had a talk show. Punks used to always go on talk shows and make up lies. They put us up in a real nice hotel and flew us out from California."

Perhaps the secret to the subtle warmth that permeates Out Hud's recordings from that first 7" through to *Let Us Never Speak of It Again* is their closeness—dating back to their Sacramento days most of the members have lived together in the same apartment, which tends to also be the place where they practice. With Offer, Vandervolgen, and Forbes currently residing in a remote neighborhood near the Brooklyn Navy Yard and South Williamsburg's Hasidic Jewish enclave—and Schnick living nearby—the music never seems to stop in Out Hud-land.

"We practice every day almost," Schnick says. "It definitely helps us to be able to hear the same things, and we influence each other with what we are listening to. Justin is a really awesome DJ, and he'll just be downstairs playing stuff. You get to

"I would be psyched if somebody told me this sounds like a lot of things but not really like anything."

—Justin Vandervolgen

absorb all this good music all the time. And the good thing about the Hasids is that, for some reason, they are always up so late so we can practice super late."

One of Out Hud's pious neighbors even made their album—in the haunting intro to "The Song So Good They Named It Thrice." "There was this three year-old just kid singing on his balcony one day," Schnick recalls. "Justin thought it was amazing, and had to record it. I'm into them—they are so mysterious."

Having a competent sound engineer with quality recording equipment also enabled the group to complete their album at home after a trip to National Recording Studio in Washington, DC wasn't as fruitful as they might have hoped.

"I feel like this album was written five times," says Forbes, who made many of the demos that morphed, in some degree or another, into the songs on *Let Us Never Speak of It Again*. "We went in to record it and that is one thing. Once Justin gets his hand on it, it has another life. Then once we hear that, we're like 'Wait, now I have another idea; I am going to put some other parts on it.' We are always going back and forth."

Out Hud's *Let Us Never Speak of It Again* is out now on Kranky Records. [www.brainwashed.com/outhud](http://www.brainwashed.com/outhud), [www.kranky.net](http://www.kranky.net)



Out Hud (left to right): Phyllis Forbes, Justin Vandervolgen, Nic Offer, and Molly Schnick

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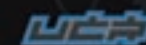


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# JUST A gigolo

Munich's DJ Hell manages his eclectic stable of electro characters.

WORDS: DANIEL SIWEK PHOTO: DANIEL MAYER

*"Who's that gigolo on the street/With his hands in his pockets and his crocodile feet." –Neneh Cherry*

It's 10AM, Brazil time. I'm given the hotel alias of DJ Hell (born **Helmut Geier**), the mastermind behind the International DecJay Gigolo label, and told I've got a one-minute margin to get the call through or he's going swimming. South America's long been a hotspot for German tourists, but Hell doesn't have much time to rest. He's come to rock Rio: promoting his company, his recently re-released album, *NY Muscle*, and, as always, "looking for new Gigolos." Brazil is where he's found the label's third Gigoletta, Romina Cohn, and he's always on the prowl. "I don't know what will happen once I stop traveling," he nervously projects. "I found most of the artists on the way."

Hell didn't just pull up to Gigolo's first release: David Carretta's 1997 "Innerwood." There was a lot of *fahren auf die Autobahn* before becoming an A&R man and label owner. It start-

ed with Hell driving to Munich from the bumfuck town in Bavaria where he was born in 1962. By the late '70s, he was a teenage punk rock DJ, and eventually he was exposed to the experimental yet automated sounds of Detroit techno, Chicago house, and UK acid. Hell's irreverent sets earned him a reputation, and a slot at Berlin's Love Parade 1992, where he unveiled his first single, the self-pressed white-label "My Definition of House." Showing off a fascination with Juan Atkins' style of motor-booty bass and Jeff Mills' "punishing beats," Hell says he "liked the idea of funk being raw, but also being new and futuristic."

Offered an album deal with Disko-B, Hell constructed the full-length, *Geteert & Gefedert* (1994), with Gigolo-in-waiting Richard Bartz. Hell continued to perfect his industrial and dark-wave-inspired techno but his sophomore release, *Munich Machine* (Disko-B), four years later, showed an artist who had loosened up enough to admit his love of Euro-disco (via an updated version of



"It's okay to be comedians, but we never sacrifice the art."



Barry Manilow’s “Copacabana”). “[The stage] was already set for [Gigolo’s] silly/serious approach,” he declares, “but we had no idea how seriously people would take our silliness. It’s okay to be comedians, but we never sacrifice the art.”

#### OVEREXPOSED BUT UNDERGROUND

“In the beginning we started [International DeeJay Gigolo] with a ‘from a DJ to a DJ attitude,’” Hell explains. “We were trying to [make] exclusive material that DJs really appreciated and played in clubs.” The zeitgeist began in the year 2000. Hell was simply following his instincts, putting out the new wave of electronic pop artists, but by 2001 his stable looked like the Superfriends of electroclash. “We had Miss Kitten, Fischerspooner, Mount Sims, Vitalic, and Tiga,” he says, listing each with the pride and prejudice you feel for a pair of kicks that may have been the rage last year, but you’re now reluctant to flaunt.

After electroclash exploded, Hell and NY promoter/impresario Larry T exchanged public quotes and criticism over who created it and why it should be killed, though much of the hype/bickering seemed contrived. “I don’t want to say the name,” Hell starts in on you-know-who, “but if you look at the artists they were trying to push, some of them don’t even exist anymore. You can’t fake the funk. You need something more than just a cover of a magazine.”

“**There’s no sellout shit,**” testifies Canadian DJ/producer Tiga, a former Gigolo. “That’s a big deal for a label that got as much hype as Gigolo did. Other labels would’ve been doing that cheesy Eric Morillo mix,” he says, recalling the success of his electro cover version of Corey Hart’s “Sunglasses At Night,” “but Hell makes music that’s not fucked with.”

Even though Hell used T’s Williamsburg club Luxx to film his video for “Keep On Waiting”—and got dissed even more for including P.Diddy and Princess Superstar in the clip—he is keen to prove that Gigolo has always been about the music. He insists that, for every accessible dance track he’s put out, you must also “talk about The Residents, Throbbing Gristle, Tuxedomoon, or D.A.F.” And he hopes listeners won’t buy into the pigeonholing. “I hope that after the electroclash hype, especially in America, they don’t just focus on the big names,” he states. “There’s always something avant garde behind the door.”

#### THE GIGOLO FACTORY

While they call theirs the “Gigolo style,” it’s hard to pin down. An artist like Savas Pascalidis plays a sort of neo-Italo, in-house producer Abe Duque makes jacking, Newcleus-meets-EBM techno, and Mount Sims is on a concept album desert trip. And that’s not even considering rock acts like Psychonauts and Crossover—shit, they play guitars. “Every artist has their own fantasies,” confirms Hell, “but I can recognize what’s right for us in two seconds, and we all believe in the [concept of the] ‘Gigolo Factory.’”

Greatly inspired by that other “Factory” foreman, Andy Warhol, Hell’s a collector of characters in the best sense, right down to his transsexual muse/mascot Amanda Lepore, who he’s sure “would’ve been a ‘Factory Superstar’ if she was around in Andy’s time.” He’s also got Warhol’s prolific work ethic: now approaching 160 releases, he promises a lot more in 2005: “We’re putting out a new record almost every week!” he says.

In German, the name Hell doesn’t have anything to do with the devil; in fact, Geier’s moniker closer translates to something that shines brightly. Perhaps this Gigolo’s future is so “hell,” he’ll have to wear shades...at night, of course.

The reissue of DJ Hell’s *NY Muscle* and the compilation *International DeeJay Gigolos CD Eight: Selected by DJ Hell* are out now. [www.gigolo-records.de](http://www.gigolo-records.de)

## International Sin Set: Six Essential Gigolos



#### ABE DUQUE

A former Marine Corps mechanic, producer Abe Duque now calls his Hollis, Queens garage his studio. Duque was in on the ground floor of NY techno and met Hell through notorious DJ/drug dealer Lord Michael when he had a residency at the Limelight. His new album, *So Underground It Hurts*, collects the singles he released on Abe Duque Records, and he describes it as “jacky techno and electro that’s on the bang-bang tip.” He also produced and contributed to Hell’s *NY Muscle*. **ON AMANDA:** “Hell’s got something for her, but all I got is conjecture” **ON MISS KITTIN:** “She once told me she was a super-market checkout girl.” **PICK THIS GIGOLO:** “Because I skip the bullshit and cut to the good stuff!”



#### PLAY PAUL

Paul de Homem-Christo—the younger brother of Daft Punk’s Guy Manuel—has his own achievements to tout (“I found some polyphonic ringtones of [my single] ‘Be Right Part 2.’ What an honor!”). He also cites differences between his and his brother’s music: “I quit sampling, like, five years ago. They didn’t.” His “Lalaland” single (Gigolo #142) will hopefully inspire a whole album. Paul enjoys “being paid to travel around the world, playing clubs, and sometimes going back to the hotel with girls.” **ON SAVAS PASCALIDIS:** We once had a contest making phrases out of his name in French: How are you? = Savas (Ça va?); Don’t play the vinyl! = Pascalidis (*Passe pas les disques*.)” **ON XLOVER:** “Their singer has the longest nails ever!” **PICK THIS GIGOLO:** “Women, if you’re looking for some action with a tiny, firm butted young boy, call Play Paul at 1-555-TINY-BUT”



#### AMANDA LEPORE

David Bowie and Bryan Ferry had cabaret diva (and rumored hermaphrodite) Amanda Lear. Andy Warhol had the first transsexual movie star. Candy Darling. DJ Hell’s in good company with Amanda Lepore as his muse. This former Pat Fields employee/club kid likes the fact that her face has replaced Sid Vicious as the new label mascot. “Hell knows that I dress like a movie star, but have punk sensibility,” she says. “I’m an icon, too.” **ON HELL:** “He’s never pimped me out, but he’s got good taste.” **PICK THIS GIGOLETTA:** “Because I’m the most famous transsexual in the world with a fully functional vagina!” [And one of *NY Muscle*’s bonus tracks is “I Am Amanda Lepore.”]



#### MOUNT SIMS

With a show that rivals those mythic Klaus Nomi at the Pyramid performances, Matt Sims is hoping his *Ultra* success won’t tarnish him for good. Spending a lot of time in his head, the desert, and Brian Eno’s *Before And After Science*, Sims says of his follow-up, *Wild Light*, “It’s a far more personal album. I was going through a lot of things when I wrote it.” While he insists he’s “nobody’s bitch,” he concedes *Wild Light* has that “dark edge that all Gigolo artists have in common.” Sims met Hell over the Internet. **ON DAVID CARRETTA:** “He’s the future of hard, dancier, more industrial music. He references Front 242’s *Geography* but applies it to Italo-disco, taking that industrial edge to people with large mustaches doing cocaine off mirrors on a yacht off the coast of Italy!”




#### XLOVER

Not many producers can say they’ve worked for the master of sleaze-pop, Prince—in his Paisley Park studios, no less. Bryan Black brings what he learned in Minneapolis to a new crew of sexy muthafuckers, XLOVER. They’ve got vocalist Nina Rai’s stage antics, a drummer and bassist who are adamant about touring the world, and a new debut, *Pleasure & Romance*. With Princess Superstar guesting on a cover of “Darlin’ Nikki,” Black promises to bring back “that perverse, yet classy pop” that Prince once mastered, and says the rest of the material is “about the rush of experimenting with your sexuality, the thrill of the chase, and the devastation when it’s over.” **PICK THESE GIGOLOS:** “If nothing else, because we have the sexiest singer and we’ll lead you on, until suddenly it ends with a bang!



#### MISS KITTIN

She may be an Astralwerks artist now, but Caroline Herve will always be remembered for her Gigolo turn. Her collaboration with The Hacker, “Frank Sinatra,” helped tip an avalanche that is still claiming victims. **ON MEETING HELL:** “We met in Marseille when we played together in a rave. In the afternoon we went swimming and Hell cut his feet on a mussel. He was bleeding and limping all night. The next day Hell drove my diesel car to David Carretta’s house in Toulouse, where we spent the week playing *petanque* and eating BBQ.” **ON DAVID CARRETTA:** “He taught us how to have style and dress up.” **ON HELL:** “He’s more like an electro Don Corleone. Like the father of the family, he’s protective, convincing, and always has the last word.”



# Let reading between THE LINES

The Books connects the dots between 23rd century bluegrass, cheap consumer software, and sampledelic free verse.

WORDS: CAMERON MACDONALD PHOTOS: DAVID LACHMAN

The title of The Books' third album, *Lost and Safe*, is the damn truth. Listen: bluegrass melodies on banjo and fiddle contorted into paperclip sculptures; crates of samples seemingly dug by a blindfolded Goodwill shopper; lyrics that make accidental sense. It sounds like everything from Asiatic Appalachian folk to a soundtrack for a future where robots made of empty tomato cans, ham radios, and duct tape rule the world.

Not that the NYC/Western Massachusetts-based duo of Nick Zammuto and Paul de Jong can completely explain their music either. "We never heard our kind of stuff until we started doing it," de Jong says. "That basically means we didn't know what we were doing at first," adds Zammuto.

Zammuto and de Jong met in 2000, when they happened to share the same Manhattan apartment. Zammuto is a visual artist who previously dabbled with stroboscope-like guitar on *Willscher* (Apartment B), an album recorded through a PVC pipe. De Jong is a classically trained cellist from the Netherlands, who spent years modifying his instrument with guitar effects. ("I largely wasted my time on a decade of experiments," he quips.)

The Books was initially formed to create "pop music," says De Jong. "[But] when Nick said 'pop,' we both stopped to ask what it really means. [The definition] took us both by surprise." The band kept the pop format as a loose premise to work in, but their music developed a striking cut 'n' paste aesthetic more endearing to the folks on IDM listservs than, say, Christina Aguilera fans.

The Books' music isn't easy to translate, but it's not exactly "folktronica" or "digital folk," tags popular with the critics and journalists who acclaimed their scattered 2002 debut *Thought for Food* and the following cult hit, *The Lemon of Pink*. "We just happen to use those instruments that people identify with folk music—banjo, mandolin, fiddle," says de Jong. "But at the same time, what we do has so little to do with folk music."

Nonetheless, The Books *do* embody electronic music's "folk" essence—namely that anyone with the right software and imagination can domesticate electricity. They favor cheap consumer software,

basic microphones, and a sampler. "I think it keeps you more centered as an artist," says Zammuto, extolling the virtues of simple editing software like Sound Forge and Acid. "It makes you think more carefully about the source material."

To make *Lost and Safe*, The Books visited a Wal-Mart to record bouncing balls, performed junk-shop percussion with an amplified file cabinet, and listened to 10 hours worth of minidiscs of Zammuto's brother rambling in the woods (a representative sample: "*Expectation leads to disappointment/If you don't expect something big, huge or exciting/Usually, uh, I don't know, it's not just as, yeah*"). "We are both into collecting sounds that are so out of this world, but at the same time very natural," de Jong explains. "It can open up people's ears to sounds they never thought of listening to." Instead of mutating the sounds with zeroes and ones, they let those moments breathe. "Things will have to stand on their own in order to survive," offers Zammuto. "You can't take crap and turn it into gold. You [have to] start with something really nice and work with it."

One of The Books' favorite pastimes is recontextualizing samples of what de Jong calls "language oddities." "In all our three records, there are cut-up language samples that are done by serious voices 40 to 50 years ago," he explains. "[They say things] that could not have been said

back then, because we chopped them up and made a new material order." There is room for self-parody within this technique—as when a sample of an evangelist from the Rev. Jerry Falwell's church interrupts a pastoral banjo and cello duet to dictate "Sit up straight and be quiet! Sit down, son. Sit up straight in your seat!" Often, The Books carry on entire conversations made of disparate utterances. In "An Animated Description of Mr. Maps," one voice says "You may call me brother now," while another (sampled from a separate record) replies, "Yes, brother, I know."

Included in *Lost's* lyric sheets are lines both sung and sampled—with no noted distinctions. The band's chicory-watered vocals add to this theme, containing meditations on seeking order within chaos. "That's the basic state of the world," offers Zammuto. "That's really the way we think about sound and its potential to connect to other sounds... [meaning] can be magnified if you mix them together in the right way. But as always, it's about bringing whatever you have to it. We try not to pin down the meaning—we try to leave it open for everyone."

*Lost and Safe* is out this month on Tomlab. *Prefuse 73 Reads The Books* EP will be released later this year on Warp Records.

[www.thebooksmusic.com](http://www.thebooksmusic.com), [www.tomlab.de](http://www.tomlab.de)

"You can't take  
crap and turn it  
into gold." —Nick Zammuto



## PREFUSE 73 ON THE BOOKS

"[Around November 2003], I was introduced to *The Lemon of Pink* from Kieren Hebden (Four Tet), who had picked it up while we were on tour together. Once I put it in my headphones, I was hearing something so unique and original that it became the soundtrack to that tour for me.

"As soon as I got home, I contacted Nick (Zammuto) and told him I wanted to include him in the list of guests on [my] next album. Months later I received material from them via bicycle, and from there I figured it would make sense to make an EP out of it. (The CD) was over 20 minutes of stripped-down sessions from the *The Lemon of Pink* and other field recordings. I wanted to do some versions of their songs with beats à la Prefuse 73, but not exactly consider them remixes—more like collaborations. I started working on that separate from my actual album, trying to incorporate only their sounds. I wanted to create something 'banging' out of it as well as new compositions. The sounds I used would be aligned with [theirs] sonically, rather than aligning our styles of production, which differ but both rely heavily on edited elements.

"I feel their last record was generally slept on and remains a gem to be discovered and felt by many who can relate to any inventive forms of music. It's a mesh of a bugged-out Nonesuch record, a perfect psychedelic folk record, and a precisely cut-up edit record made out of beautifully composed pieces rolled into one...

"I don't know what else to say. They're on their own shit."

—Scott Herren (*Prefuse 73, Savath + Savalas, Piano Overlord*)



The Books: Paul de Jong (left) and Nick Zammuto

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# a different DRUM

House music: it's a spiritual thing. At least as far as Osunlade's concerned.

WORDS: PETER NICHOLSON  
PHOTO: SUZY GORMAN

It's easy for some to overlook Osunlade's music. Subtle and refined, eschewing flash for finesse and fanciness for finish, this producer's original tracks and remixes for artists as varied as 4hero and Cesaria Evora reward an attentive ear more than one attuned to the latest trend. On the other hand, Osunlade himself is used to double takes. Tall, dark, and handsome—and frequently adorned with a porcupine quill through his nose—Osunlade cuts a figure as confidently dashing as his music is quietly unique.

Just as his sartorial splendor runs from bespoke suits to colorful African tunics, Osunlade's music reflects myriad global influences. At the end of the '90s, he was one of a few producers—alongside Jerome Sydenham, Joaquin "Joe" Claussell, and Dennis Ferrer—who began to take house music back to its African and Latin roots. Turning away from overtly synthetic sounds, they strove for an organic feel that recalled the genre's origins in disco jams driven by live percussion; their music was typified by dense polyrhythms, hand drums and Afrobeat kits laid over house's trademark 4/4 thump, and chanted or call-and-response vocals. Osunlade's sound continues to be particularly vibrant within this genre, as he balances a spontaneous rawness with the typically sleek production values of East Coast house.

Osunlade's musical focus is firmly on the inside. He is a trained priest, and the art he makes springs from an internal calm fed by his spirituality. "I started studying Ifa, which is the origin of [the] Yoruba [faith], in '91," Osunlade says over the phone from his home in San Juan, Puerto Rico. "I always found it very interesting and very scary at the same time."

Yet his music—from the deep, driving house of *Paradigm* (his 2001 album for Soul Jazz) to his broken Afrobeat remix of Keziah Jones on the new *Yoruba Soul Mixes* compilation (BBE/Rapster)—doesn't wear its heart on its sleeve. Osunlade says he doesn't consciously try to make his music spiritual. "I don't play on any of it; I think that's too contrived and gimmicky," explains the 36-year-old producer. "Even my piercings are something that happened even before I discovered Yoruba. At, like, 17, they were something I felt I needed to do as a representation of who I was. It's just who I am and who I feel comfortable being."

In addition to being a typical creative teenager expressing his individuality, Osunlade was also an atypically in-demand songwriter and producer, working on none other than Gerardo's massive pop hit "Rico Suave." Osunlade cites his years in Los Angeles as a learning experience about one side of the music industry, but he has since charted a less commercial path that includes establishing his own Yoruba Records label.

Initially a venue for his own productions, Yoruba just released the compilation *Ibara*, which features artists from Australia, South Africa, Ghana, and other countries performing everything from R&B to house. Yoruba's organic, rhythmically complex sound, best heard on songs like Erro's "Don't Change," has become a favorite of soulful house DJs, though Osunlade himself didn't begin playing records until after the release of *Paradigm*. "I actually hate DJing," he confesses with a chuckle. "The only thing [I like] about the club scene is the connection with the people. You get to see the immediate reaction of how a person responds to a specific vibration."

Osunlade's next move is reaching out to audiences directly through a solo artist album. He's buoyed by reactions to a series of live dates he did in Europe with a six-piece band, but struggles to classify the songs, particularly those written years ago during *iyawo*, his year of studying to be an Ifa priest. "I moved home to my parents, and the only thing I could do was write," he explains. "So most of these songs are from that period. It was a pivotal point in my life of personal searching and connecting with ancestors and spirits." Dismissing neo-soul and R&B descriptors, Osunlade settles for describing his new sound thusly: "It's the same thing I do in house music, except at a slower tempo [and] with my vocals. It's a very spiritual album, but something I've kept on the back burner for some time, just because I didn't want to deal with the responsibility of being an artist."

Osunlade is proud both of his music and his faith, but never boastful. "I'm actually grateful," he says. "Because of the music I find more people are really interested in learning more about the culture and spirituality. I never set out to do that, but it's really cool that people connect to that level." *Osunlade Presents The Yoruba Soul Remixes* is out now on BBE/Rapster. *Ibara* is out now on Yoruba Records. [www.rapsterrecords.com](http://www.rapsterrecords.com), [www.yorubarecords.com](http://www.yorubarecords.com)



Laibach



Cabaret Voltaire



Einstürzende Neubauten



Throbbing Gristle

# industry STANDARDS

With industrial music inspiring everything from breakcore to house, XLR8R decodes six of the genre's most important bands.  
WORDS: CAMERON MACDONALD

In the recession and strike-addled late '70s, UK art terrorist Genesis P-Orridge coined the phrase "industrial music for industrial people" to describe a new blues for the worker—music distilled from the numb monotony of the assembly line and the restless thoughts that make sleep impossible after work. However, it is doubtful that the average proletariat could relax to this stuff, with its soundtrack of drills, screeches, snaps, grinding gears, synths dripping blood, snippets of atrocities, and images of an androgynes in fascist garb dancing in the streets.

Nonetheless, Throbbing Gristle and fellow multimedia art terrorists Cabaret Voltaire kicked in the door (sometimes waving the 4/4), granting punk a truly apocalyptic scope well beyond the Sex Pistols' declaration of "No Future." Countless bands followed suit in the '80s and '90s, rising and falling before progressing (and, some argue, devolving) into goth disco and later digitized metal. Yet industrial's fingerprints are still smudged on everything from laptop noise and breakcore to power electronics and Detroit techno. Given the recent crop of reissues from industrial mavericks, the time has come to provide a primer on the greats.



**Throbbing Gristle [1975 - 1981]**  
 There is something terribly malevolent about noiseniks donning Hawaiian shirts and country club wear on their record covers. Arguably the premier industrial rock band, Throbbing Gristle connected the dots between performance art, coal-blackened distortion, Martin Denny's "exotica," and synth pop so generic that factory stamps insure the quality. Frontman Genesis P-Orridge dunked his head into a vat of echo and sociopolitical perversion—from reciting a weak satellite broadcast of a burn victim's account in "Hamburger Lady" to droning the sleep-deprived slave anthem "United." Concerts involved tape-loop torture, snuff flick fantasias, and P-Orridge strangling himself with piano wire. These transgressors also

happened to influence many techno and new wave artists with their synth pop number "Hot on the Heels of Love." The so-called "Wreckers of Civilization" disbanded in 1981; afterwards its members explored acid techno and Chicago house with Psychic TV, and outer-limits noisescapes in Coil.  
**Influenced:** Buck 65, Two Lone Swordsmen, Carl Craig, Nurse with Wound, Wolf Eyes, Crack:W.A.R.  
**Essential listening:** *20 Jazz Funk Greats, 2nd Annual Report*  
**Throbbing Gristle's limited edition Live December 2004, A Souvenir of Camber Sands is out now on Mute/Industrial. The reunion show was recorded, burned, and sold after the concert ended. www.throbbing-gristle.com**

**Cabaret Voltaire [1974-Present]**

In their early '80s heyday, the Cabs were akin to a garage-funk band heard through a scrambled idiot box. Arisen from Sheffield's factory yards, Cabaret Voltaire took the trance of dub, krautrock and James Brown, along with *musique concrète's* distortions of reality, and built a conch for the Information Age. Farfisa organs and stone-age drum machines kept disjointed time, while tape loops of white noise and media whispers clashed with vocodered pleas. While Throbbing Gristle sprayed repellant in audience members' faces, the Cabs hypnotized with their din. By the end of the Thatcher age, the band dwelled in electro-funk and Detroit techno. Member Richard K. Kirk further explored tribal house and techno in Sandoz and Sweet Exorcist, while Chris Watson became a field recording artist capable of making Icelandic glaciers sound positively Martian.

**Influenced:** A Guy Called Gerald, Meat Beat Manifesto, Autechre, Black Dog  
**Essential Listening:** *Red Mecca, 2x45, The Original Sound of Sheffield '78/'82*  
**Cabaret Voltaire's Methodology '74/'78: Attic Tapes is out now on Mute. www.mute.com**



**Einstürzende Neubauten [1980 - Present]**  
 These German post-punks made industrial music that truly deserved its name. Einstürzende Neubauten ("Collapsing New Buildings") emulated the pock-marked streets of West Berlin. Utilizing scrap-metal, power drills, jackhammers, shopping carts, discarded furniture and factory detritus as percussion, these urban primitives made art out of the obsolete. Cynics can dismiss EN as predecessors to Broadway's *Stomp*, but they were long the standard that industrial

lived up to (until Ministry rang death metal's factory whistle). The band still prevails—they recorded last year's drone album *Perpetuum Mobile* under webcam surveillance and amid online visitors' suggestions.  
**Influenced:** Matmos, Nine Inch Nails, SPK, Ministry  
**Essential Listening:** *Kollaps, Kalte Sterne—Early Recordings, Strategies Against Architecture '80-'83*  
**Einstürzende Neubauten's Kalte Sterne—Early Recordings and Perpetuum Mobile are out now on Mute. www.neubaten.org**



**Laibach [1979 - Present]**  
 "We are fascists as much as Hitler was a painter," proclaimed Laibach. This art-terrorist unit embodied the aesthetic of horror and pageantry in fascism. They named themselves after a Nazi German term for their native Slovenian village, even dressing the part as mock military officers as they concocted Wagnerian operas driven by steam-blasted guitars and industrial beats that landed like fists. Their subversion attracted state persecution in communist Yugoslavia, making them a cult favorite among Westerners curious about what madness lurked behind the Iron

Curtain. Laibach caught even more attention with *Let It Be*, their 1988 song-by-song cover of The Beatles' classic—comfort music turned into a rally around the war drum. The band remains alive and well, and has just released *Anthems*, which collects their touches on classics by Queen, the Rolling Stones, and Andrew Lloyd Webber.  
**(Unfortunately) Influenced:** Rammstein  
**Essential Listening:** *Let it Be, Opus Dei*  
**Laibach's Anthems is out now on Mute. www.laibach.nsk.si**

Genesis P-Orridge coined the phrase "industrial music for industrial people" to describe a new blues for the worker.

**Ministry [1981- Present]**

God knows what would have happened if Ministry had continued to ape Human League or Dead or Alive. Thankfully, frontman Al Jorgensen and co-conspirator Paul Barker shed their fey new wave skins when they heard the blood-oiled machine pulse of speed metal—and it's doubtful that industrial rock would've made a connection with the American teenage wasteland if it wasn't for them. Ministry is best remembered for "NWO," which translated metal into a robot street riot of tape-looped guitars and samples of Bush Sr. declaring a "new world order." The Chicago band's late '80s work is still its best: synths, guitars, and piston-hammered beats bludgeon the music into a groove as Jorgensen's barfly growl catalyzes trashy rock into anthem territory. Ministry rebounded in 2004 with a new album that revisited past glories, a remixed version of their death disco landmark, *Twitch*, and reissues of their fêted and loathed singles (released on Wax Trax).

**Inspired:** Every industrial/metal band after them  
**Essential Listening:** *Land of Rape and Honey, A Mind is a Terrible Thing to Taste, Side Trax, Psalm 69*  
**Ministry's Early Trax and Side Trax are out now on Rykodisc. www.ministrymusic.org**



**Nitzer Ebb [1982- Present]**  
 Alongside Front 242, Nitzer Ebb brought industrial to the warehouse dancefloor during the mid-'80s. They combined S&M imagery with a metallic disco that now sounds thoroughly pasteurized and chlorinated. These Essex blokes often stripped everything down to Douglas McCarthy's teeth-torn vocals, David Goody's nightstalker synths, and Bob Harris' Teutonic beats. Their 1986 debut, *That Total Age*, paved the way for Electronic Body Music or "EBM," industrial's sulking stepchild, slouching in the corner with clove in mouth. Nonetheless, Flood's remix of "Join in the Chant" found common ground with Detroit techno and Chicago

house DJs, and is now considered a major influence among many producers of said genres and its mutations. Nitzer Ebb then toured with Depeche Mode, had their tastes spoiled by synth pop, and later faded into obscurity until releasing *Big Hit* in '95.  
**Inspired:** Richie Hawtin, Sven Väth, DJ Hell, Panacea  
**Essential listening:** *That Total Age*  
**www.nitzer-ebb.de**

# ARTISTS AND DJs SLIP IN THEIR LOVE LETTERS TO INDUSTRIAL

## A GUY CALLED GERALD

"I think that (Cabaret Voltaire's "Hypnotized") was one of the first remixes I did. They were from a Northern electronic sound—crossover indie rock with a clean electro sound. The track they gave me was really raw and even now I prefer remixing raw tracks. That first remix taught me a lot about how to handle a remix."



## TIM SWEENEY ("Beats in Space," WNYU 89.1—New York, DFA)

"(I play) Throbbing Gristle, early Meat Beat Manifesto, Ministry, Front 242, Nitzer Ebb. They bring an electronic element to a harder, punk attitude. The electronic side brings me into it; they have some synth lines that are really nice. Throbbing Gristle's "Hot on the Heels of Love" is a classic, and "Radio Babylon" by Meat Beat Manifesto. Ministry is such a funny group, their early work is not industrial—I can play that and then play the crossover industrial. For Front 242, [the anthem is] "Headhunter" and for Nitzer Ebb, it's "Join in the Chant." After the early '90s, (industrial) loses me. The recent stuff I've heard doesn't click with me in the same way.



## ARNAUD REBOTINI (Black Strobe)

"(Industrial) has had a great influence on my work at different points. Nitzer Ebb has a funky, brutal, and minimal side—for me, they were the real pioneers of techno. The Cabs made really dark pop songs and Neubauten had a really different way of thinking about music. For me, industrial means this scene in the '80s around TG, Nurse with Wound, the Cabs, or Neubauten. Most of the things I've heard recently sound like shit. I think that industrial is more in bands like Pan Sonic or Autechre."



## JACK DANGERS (Meat Beat Manifesto, Tino Corp.)

"To me, 'industrial' means Throbbing Gristle; it's not this mass-marketed, commercial music which came on the scene in the late '80s. Bands like Test Department in the early '80s used a lot of sounds visually, [like] grinding metal or splashing water. But I remember Depeche Mode getting on the Test Department bandwagon and watering it down—bastardizing it. It was '84 or '85. I suppose that's when what we know as industrial exploded from labels like Wax Trax.

[Ministry's work] to me was wrong—it wasn't industrial. To me the original groups were very anti-guitar; if they used a guitar it would be in a very abstract way. [Bands like Ministry] were using [the guitar] like a rock instrument and that was a clash that never really



appealed to me.

"The very first Meat Beat Manifesto live show was supporting Nitzer Ebb in 1987 show at The Frigate in Brixton. We only did one song, ("I Got the Fear") because we only knew one song. And then everyone got really pissed off. The promoter wasn't going to pay us and he wasn't going to pay them. They smashed their dressing room and we just went home (laughs)."

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-Time Out New York

"The speed of Mobius Band's progress is stunning. I have no doubt they'll emerge as a force to be reckoned with."  
-Joe Tangari, Pitchfork (praise for their self-release "Three")

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# PSYCHED OUT

Edan marries classic hip-hop and '60s rock to create an artful sophomore album.

WORDS: JESSE SERWER ILLUSTRATION: TROPHY  
ORIGINAL PHOTO: CHRISTOPHER WOODCOCK

Look closely at the cover art of Edan's *Beauty and the Beat*—a pastiche of swirling colors with Prince Paul, Flavor Flav, and an assortment of old school hip-hop heads draped under ill-fitting afros and mod hairdos—and you might find the 30-minute whirlwind that is the MC/DJ/producer's second album encapsulated in a nutshell.

"The colorful part of the record I ganked from some weird rock 45," the 26-year-old Maryland native explains from his apartment in Boston's Back Bay, as he does some last-minute record sorting for a one-off London DJ gig the next night. "I removed the titles and graphics on that record and cut out faces of the group that was in the heads of hair, and then found various hip-hop faces and put them underneath the hair. I looked at the 45 and thought 'This represents the rock aspect of the record, but I wonder if there is a way to incorporate the hip-hop aspect visually?'"

While Edan says he was well aware that The Go-Gos already had an album called *Beauty and the Beat* ("But I didn't care"), he was actually referencing Sugar Hill songwriter/session man Duke Bootee's short-lived mid-'80s record label, Beauty & The Beat. "I took a face or two from [those] sleeves and threw 'em under the blonde hair," he explains. "I was getting subtle with it for my own enjoyment or anyone else that recognizes. It all represents what I was doing musically. Taking things that already exist and throwing them in a big pot, to me, is such a fly form of art."

A mélange of psychedelic soundscapes, abstract lyricism, and old school homages, Edan's 13-track LP is perhaps more densely layered with samples than any full-length hip-hop album in recent memory. Although cobbled together from eclectic source material, the album finds its comfort zone connecting with late 60s/early '70s psych rock, a vibe its maker rounds out with some self-recorded Moog work, and loops that frequently bleed from track to track. "I didn't look at (*Beauty and the Beat*) as a psychedelic record, I looked at it as a record I had to make," Edan exhorts. "I don't compartmentalize shit. We got to squash all these boundaries, end all the segregation in music, and just let freedom ring, son."

Lyrically, Edan's MC diatribes fall somewhere between MF Doom's wistful streams of consciousness and Nas' and KRS-One's earnest desire to educate ("*Walk out the doors and explore/With the innocence of kids age four/I frolic in the sand with a colony of ants/My particles expand/Building oxygen in plants/from Rakim to Caz/To Lakim Shabazz/Illogically advanced with the knowledge of the past*" goes one particularly illustrative verse on "Making Planets"). And while listeners who've caught his early EPs, his debut LP *Primitive Plus*, and his exceptional *Fast Rap* mixtape (as Edan The DJ) already know how deep Edan's passion for hip-hop runs, "Rock and Roll"'s references to The Zombies, Love, and Small Faces reveal more about his background. Born to Israeli parents in the Washington, DC suburbs, Edan Portnoy played flute and bass in a jazz ensemble and made folkly four-track recordings with Dead Meadow guitarist Cory Shane before relocating to Boston to attend the prestigious Berklee School of Music.

"I have been around circles where I was just playing guitar and people didn't know I was into hip-hop," Edan says with a hip-hop-inflected drawl that makes this statement a little hard to imagine. "The whole spectrum starting with the Rolling Stones and The Beatles is what most of us crackers grew up around."

While there's no getting around the "p-word" when talking about the vibe of his new record, Edan says he didn't do any drugs during the making of *Beauty and the Beat*, nor does he have a hallucinogen-addled past. "The furthest I ever took it was 'shrooms," he insists.

Instead, Edan says, he draws his inspiration from an earnest desire to be a part of an ongoing musical continuum that needs to look to the past as much as to the future. "We have this blessing of all this recorded art—we don't have to be in the dark about what happened back then, which is really right now," he explains. "We mustn't get trapped in pushing forward. Just because something happens today does not mean it is an improvement on yesterday. That is why I study my manuscripts and my old music. I want to know how high these people have climbed, and I would like to learn from them."

Edan's *Beauty and the Beat* is out now on Lewis Recordings. [www.lewisrecordings.com](http://www.lewisrecordings.com)







# repeat OFFENDER

With incendiary lyrics and a persona to match, East London MC Crazy Titch lives up to his name.

WORDS: SARAH BENTLEY

"He's just an arsehole/He's just an arsehole/He's Dizzee Rascal/He's just an arsehole." The original Taz-produced bassline of Dizzee Rascal's anthem "Jus' A Rascal" thunders over Britain's airwaves with a raucous new vocal from 20-year-old East London MC Crazy Titch. Tim Westwood, the legendary BBC Radio One hip-hop DJ, is giving Crazy Titch's Dizzee Rascal-dissing dub-plate a third reload. "Dizzee man, maybe you should 'low it with this guy," says Westwood. "He sounds scary."

For those who don't know about his wicked sense of humor and shrewd character development, Crazy Titch would seem pretty fucking scary. Titch became notorious amongst underground UK garage heads in winter 2003, when a clash with Dizzee Rascal on pirate station De Ja Vu—in a studio packed with brand-name MCs including Titch's half-brother Durrty Doogz (now called Goodz)—ended in a scruffy brawl. A member of Roll Deep (Wiley and Dizzee's original crew) filmed the escapade and released a DVD called *Conflict*, which brought Crazy instant hype "on road."

Crazy followed up the street buzz with a classic interview about the incident on the documentary, *Lord Of The Decks*, the first professionally presented mixtape and DVD package to come out of East London's garage scene. From a bleak highrise stairwell, he vented about what happened after the fracas at De Ja Vu, his fierce monologue accompanied with wild gesticulation and contorted facial expressions. "I had loads of stuff to get off my head," says Titch. "I'd just come back from [Ayia] Napa, [the summer haven for UK garage heads]. I'd lost about three stone. I was not a happy boy at all."

Coinciding with this, Channel U, the UK's underground cable music channel, began showing his 'I Can CU' video. Shot round the estates of Titch's hood, he gets up in viewers' faces whilst a pack of hyped young men do East London's souped-up version of skanking, a dance style that, to outsiders, looks like unruly mob fighting.

Sitting in his family home in Plaistow in South East London, Titch shows me a collection of pictures of his baby nephew

then starts explaining the Dizzee beef. "Everyone was writing sly bars about each other," he begins. "I don't care about sly bars. I just say your name. Let's get the clash on." Clashing is a way for UK MCs to get recognition on the streets; they take place between individual MCs or entire crews live on pirate stations, on mixtape DVDs, and occasionally at raves. The winner is not often clear—kids in the scene will debate "who slew who" for months after the battle.

Fidgeting manically on the sofa, Titch continues. "It kicked off with Dizzee 'cos he touched my arm. I was fresh from the bing (Young Offenders Centre). There's not much personal things in the bing, so you have to respect your personal space. He invaded mine. I flipped on him. But I don't care about all that now. It's just air."

If it's just air, why release "Arseshole?" "That was last year," says Crazy. "I'm all about making tracks now. Dizzee dissed me on Westwood. I can't have that so I wrote the bars and laid it down. I didn't know how I was gonna get my tune played so I was like, 'Well, I know where Radio One is, I'll just go there.'" Westwood didn't play it the week I left it but then the following weekend he started rinsing it. I went down the studio a few weeks after that."

Appearing on the UK's biggest legal popular music station was a massive achievement for Titch, but airtime didn't always come so easy. "I used to ring Rinse FM and be like 'Yeah man, I wanna spit some lyrics' and they'd be like, 'You're good but, er, too violent for radio.'"

As he remembers his 1998 lyrics, he's concerned he might have also offended some ladies. "Alright as long as your cool," he warns, before delivering me a sample. "Suck my dick/Gnaw on my

*cum/Shit, shit with a bang you'd better run/Suck on my balls/choke on my pubic hair, 'cos you know I don't care. I'll run your house and take the hi-fi and the TV/See me. No one was spitting like me in them times."*

Laughing at the memory, it's clear Titch always knew what he was doing when he spat flow this hardcore. "It was a joke, a style. None of it was serious. I was young and gone. I knew what would make people laugh. I talk about real life situations now. I'm off the violence. Just don't push me," he says with a maniacal grin.

As UK garage thrives, the number of wannabe MC is exploding. Stages at raves are crammed with up to 20 people grappling for the mic. Few impress Titch, though. "They lack character," he grouses. "You have to be a product people wanna buy into. You have to have unique ways. You don't just grab the mic, put up your hood, and spit. You're meant to be an entertainer. Jesus."

Despite his pending leap from local hero to professional artist, Titch is adamant he'll still be a face on the scene. "I'm like a top boy in my [post-code]. You should never be gone. If you leave the hood totally, you're gonna have problems coming back."

Yanking at his Evisu jeans, he concludes, "If you look at anyone from England that's made a name for themselves, they came through garage: Lady Dynamite, Craig David, Daniel Bedingfield. But they used our sounds and cut out. That's rude. I can't ever turn 'round and say I'm not garage. Never."

Crazy Titch's mixtape and DVD *Crazy World* will be out this summer. A single, "Singalong" will be out this month on In The Hood Records. [www.crazy-titch.com](http://www.crazy-titch.com)

# LONG, STRANGE TRIP

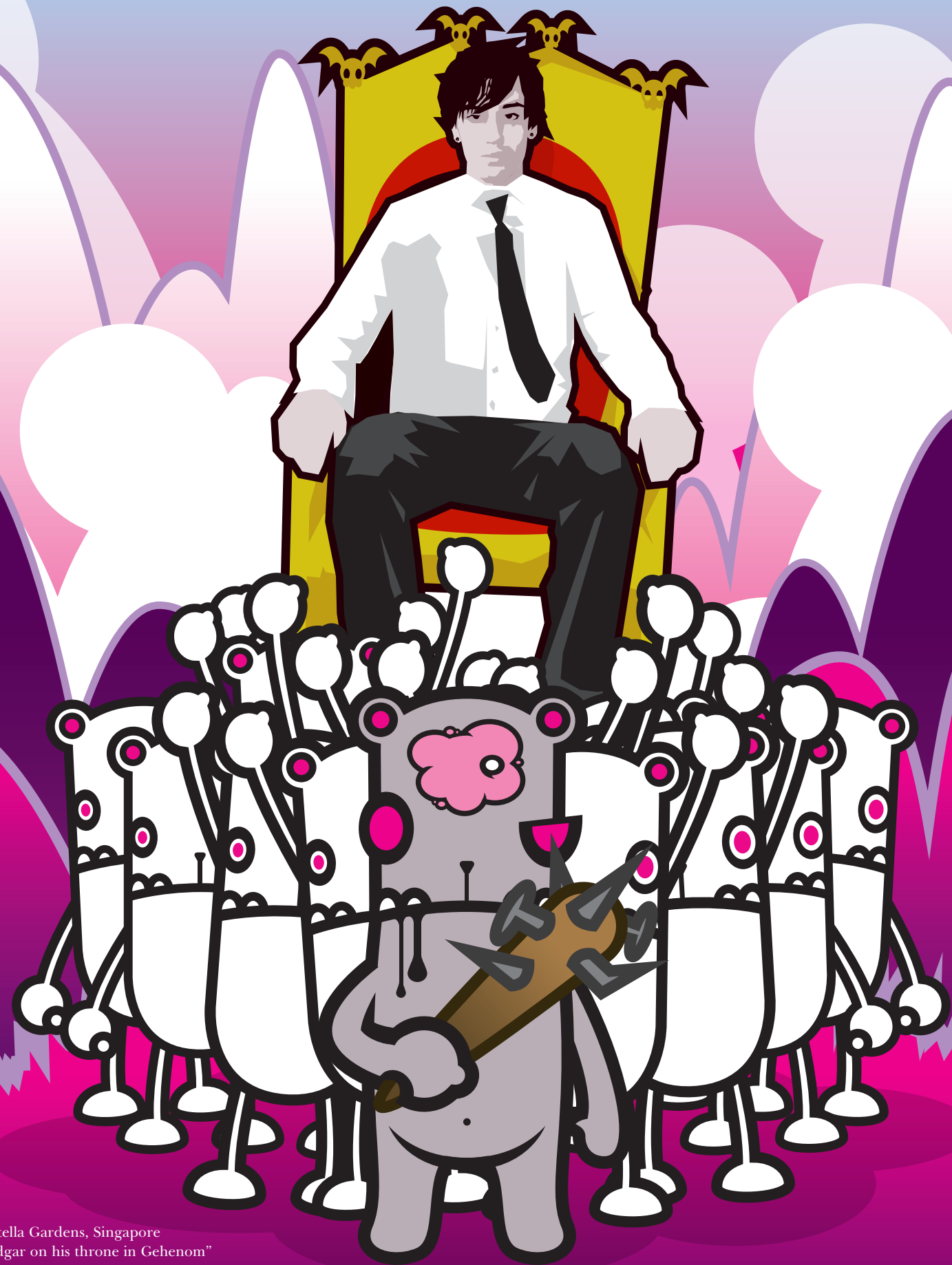
Around this time of the year in the Northern hemisphere, our thoughts naturally drift into daydreams of warm, sandy beaches, cold tropical cocktails, and cabana boys fanning us with palm fronds...and we're sure we're not the only ones. Music is one of our only escapes from rain and gloom, but we got to thinking that the people hunched over their samplers making it for us could probably use some time off too. So we asked six illustrators to envision their favorite artists on holiday and, as you'll see, some escapes are sweeter than others. *Vivian Host*

**Phil Ashcroft (Phlash)** London, England

"Boom Bip is wandering near a deserted nuclear power plant in a remote undisclosed area of the Russian Federation...think..."

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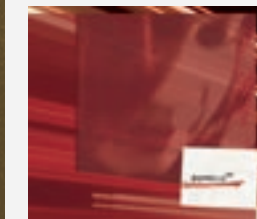
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**SIGNALDRIFT**

**ALBUM  
REVIEWS**  
04.05



**IDM AND DREAM POP CARVE OUT A COMMON SPACE.**

**SIGNALDRIFT**  
**GIRL**  
Audraglint/US/CD

Like a complex web spun diligently by a determined spider, Franz Bucholtz precariously balances his third full-length album as Signal Drift on the skeletal yet sturdy thematic connections that hang in the shadowed corners of everyday experience. His somnambulant soundscapes move effortlessly (and practically invisibly) through a handful of styles, drifting from the evocative to the sterile, yet always maintaining a calibrated coherence that draws equally from contemporary and historical influences alike.

Bucholtz's obvious affection for cascading sentimentality often occupies the same sonic space explored by ambient-shoegazers like Germany's Ulrich Schauss and Hermann und Kleine or Denmark's Manual. Yet as soon as a sense of static begins to weigh things down, Bucholtz stylishly makes a quick transition to a Vangelis-inspired movie score ("Giallo") or the melancholy music-box downtempo of the album opener "Little Girl in the Woods." Even dense, industrial atmospheres ("Hospital to Heaven") soften when followed by the dulcet tonal crescendo of "It Is," an ambient track reminiscent of Boards of Canada.

Like the aforementioned Schauss, Bucholtz utilizes varying degrees of guitar histrionics; both thickened by layers of fuzzy effects and alternately plucked and placed in the melodic foreground. Unlike last year's equally poignant *Compass*, which show-

cased a more straightforward formula of electronics augmented by live bass and drums, *Girl* eschews any tendencies toward Factory Records-type pop with its steadfast drum loops and more substantial palette of elements.

"Inside Chance" moves briskly along with support from a taut midtempo programmed drum shuffle, while "Moment to Leave" sits in tethered static, slowly growing as the sound expands yet never approaches the excess caterwaul often linked to ethereal sound design. Like much of *Girl*, Bucholtz knows exactly when to put his foot down, showing a reserved style that rarely overshadows the emotive tones that unite the disparate parts of the record.

While *Girl* exhibits a variety of sonic tendencies, it succeeds by spinning an intimately somber narrative thread that can be easily detected among its meandering, cinematic scene changes. Records like these are often malleable to a specific listening environment and *Girl* is certainly no exception. Yet while some ambient electronic records substitute volume for subtlety, Signal Drift stays true to his name by providing each of the 13 wordless passages on *Girl* with a fleeting melancholy. Invisible, yet by no means absent, it is this connective tonal disposition that not only differentiates Signal Drift from his peers, but will qualify his newest as one of this year's standout electronic recordings. *Steve Marchese*

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mon	5/9	boston, ma	paradise
tues	5/10	montreal, pq	studio c
wed	5/11	toronto, on	opera house
thu	5/12	detroit, mi	masonic temple
fri	5/13	chicago, il	metro
sat	5/14	minneapolis, mn	ascot room
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thu	5/19	portland, or	berbati's pan
fri	5/20	san francisco, ca	mezzanine
sat	5/21	los angeles, ca	el rey theater
sun	5/22	phoenix, az	freedom
tues	5/24	dallas, tx	trees
wed	5/25	austin, tx	mercury
thu	5/26	new orleans, la	twiropa
fri	5/27	atlanta, ga	variety playhouse
sat	5/28	asheville, nc	orange peel





## JOHAN SKUGGE

### JOHAN SKUGGE

#### VOLUME

Mitek/GER/CD

Oft criticized as a dead genre, constantly cannibalizing its (recent) history, “minimal tech-house” records and comps still manage to clog shop shelves weekly, originating from a seemingly teething worldwide network of monotonously mouse-clicking (mostly) men. Almost as a direct response to this monotony, Mr. Skugge unleashes this deftly effective manifesto of thoughtfully constructed tech-house, incorporating funk flourishes, electro squanks, monster bass blasts, and disco swirls. He also adds vocals both robotic and breathy, which are rarely so intoxicatingly woven into records of this ilk. *Volume* is an involving 60 minutes, and another worthy volume to add to this revived genre. *Brian Paul*



### A FRAMES

#### BLACK FOREST

Sub Pop/US/CD

Dear A Frames, what’s up with you guys being the best droning rock band since Teenage Jesus and The Jerks? Is it the monster chug of the bass and drums (“Galena,” “Black Forest II”)? Is it the minimalist, jagged guitar lines strategically ripping open the delicately placed bright melodies mid-song (“Memoranda” “U-Boat”)? Is it the bizarre lyrics delivered like lost communications from the Postmodern Emotional Mind-Fuck Intelligence Agency (“Quantum Mechanic”)? Whatever it is, the years you’ve spent crafting it have paid off. *Black Forest* is a symphony of dissonance, a tribute to noise...and a brilliant one at that. *Sincerely, Carla Costa*

### A RACE OF ANGELS

#### BROADCAST NO. 1

Luv Classics/UK/CD

Peace, love, and soul from a slightly mysterious collective channeling Motown, folk, and just a dash of Soul II Soul. Deliciously uplifting, all songs (barring the intro number) are driven by a tender, quavering tenor, with synths and strings swelling to grand effect on “We” and “Michael & the Force.” It all builds to a splendid finish with “Love Is the End,” an epic, pulsing slab of downtempo that is both insistent and charmingly hesitant before it breaks down into a spaced-out echo-fest. A Race of Angels is truly a race unto itself. *Peter Nicholson*

### ALL NATURAL

### VINTAGE

All Natural/US/CD

This disc’s title is completely appropriate: this hip-hop goes back to the day when an album meant more than standard tracks proclaiming one’s greatness on the mic and in the sack. The beats are strong, but the music layered over even more so. How many DJ/MC duos have tracks on their album dedicated to their wives like “When I See You,” which is sweet, tough and honest at the same time? “Uprise,” about making a better life, doesn’t sacrifice musicality in making its point. And “Keep It Movin’,” with El Da Sensei and Allstar, does just that. Vintage, yeah, but not old. *Luciana Lopez*

### HORACE ANDY & MAD PROFESSOR

#### FROM THE ROOTS: HORACE ANDY MEETS MAD

#### PROFESSOR

Ras/US/CD

Horace Andy teams up with the legendary Mad Professor on 14 new tracks with horns by Dean Fraser and drums and bass by Mafia & Fluxy and the legendary Sly & Robbie. Mad Professor’s modern adaptations of roots reggae suit Andy best (much better than the light jump-up of “Girl Don’t Come,” where Andy sounds lost). His voice, which has aged well, is as righteous as ever on rootsy tunes like “Babylon Bridge” and “The Bingy Man” and fits perfectly with the steppers sound of “Don’t Beat Her” and the heavily dubbed “Change Your Ways.” *Ross Hogg*

### ATOMIC HOOLIGAN

#### YOU ARE HERE

Botchit & Scarper/UK/CD

Breakbeat buddies Matt Welch and Terry Ryan survive remix realms to assemble Atomic Hooligan’s fuller-debut *You Are Here*. Break purists be warned—this wrecka rocks out of bounds. Ten of the 14 tracks sport vocal collabs: Justine Berry (M.A.S.S.) goes Grace Slick on the opener, beatbox wunderkind Xander bops on “Spitball,” and rock-singer Carpet Face, R&B-meets-South Asian-styled Pav, and Persian vocalist Maz all add pipes from electro to downtempo. Atomic Hooligan’s pals pull it off—*YAH* isn’t a hodgepodge dotted with filler, but a complete album. *Stacy Meyn*

### BENNY SINGS

#### I LOVE YOU

Sonar Kollektiv/GER/CD

Dutch songwriter Benny Sings’ new album is a well-crafted, loving re-creation of ’70s pop filled with some of the era’s most egregious clichés: harmonica fills, up-with-people lyrics, and songs about rain-bows. It’s about as edgy as the *Sesame Street* theme song. But that’s not the point. Benny’s sappy, saccharine lyrics and romantic odes are an attempt to recapture innocence lost, making this album a very guilty pleasure best enjoyed alone. Would you have these lyrics—“*Make a rainbow of 12 different colors...and piss off the clouds*”—blasting at your next party? *Patrick Sisson*

### BIG NOYD

#### ON THE GRIND

Monopolee/US/CD

They don’t come much harder than Big Noyd. Even as his Mobb Deep boys Prodigy and Havoc have bent hip-hop’s status quo to their grimy thug-isms over the past decade, Noyd has remained independent and under the radar, too raw for radio. While he might not do Mobb numbers, Noyd has a better album in *On The Grind* than their recent cookie-cutter disaster, *Amerikaz Nightmare*. Free of wack A&R direction, *Grind*’s beats (courtesy of Havoc and Ric Rude, with one from Alchemist) often evoke the grittiness of *The Infamous*, while Noyd keeps things rugged with his 2Pac-ish flow. Some more vivid storytelling and more consistent production on the album’s second half would have been nice, but this *Grind* is solid nonetheless. *Jesse Serwer*



### BLACK LIPSTICK

#### SINCERELY, BLACK LIPSTICK

Peek-A-Boo/US/CD

For the last half a decade, the listening public has been presented with a newer sound in rock music—or rather, an older one. Many of the bands currently in vogue have bypassed the ’90s “heavy urban” sound (thank god) in favor of something a little more raw, a little more real, and a little more grounded in the ’70s DIY ethic. The strummed melodies and understated vocals of Black Lipstick’s second outing may not be the most original around, but the album *is* satisfying, pleasant, and yes, even sincere. Fans of The Strokes, Interpol, and their peers will probably find a lot to like here. *Alex Posell*

### BLUPRINT

#### SLEEPING GIANT

Exceptional/UK/CD

Something funny happened on the way to the studio. Blueprint—an English trio committed to the motto “record as you mean to play live,” and nurtured by a pedigree of acid jazz and future funk—managed to produce a record barely indicative of a sound that most surely translates well in the live setting. Although at times propulsive and certainly dancefloor ready, *Sleeping Giant* teases listeners with a high gloss, heavily sandpapered smoothness that hints at the velvet soul of Om Records’ Kaskade or a number of acts from the formidable Compost roster. All three members, like their contemporaries, have a deft touch with their instruments and an acuity for meshing organic elements with electronic embellishment. And as praiseworthy as such comparisons may be, with just a little less refinement of their soulfully raw edge, Blueprint would be peerless. *Steve Marchese*

### BLUE RIBBON

#### ANOTHER TIME

Blue Bell/US/CD

I’m guessing the other time the title refers to is 1982, since Blue Ribbon’s album needs only some heavy black eyeliner to finish channeling that decade’s synth-pop scene. But while bands like New Order are obvious influences, Blue Ribbon goes for a more muted, less beat-driven sound, sticking to a quasi monotone with little emotion. Though tracks like “Miami” work, the navel-gazing “2012205,” with its drone of synths, falls flat. The album ultimately highlights the band’s need for more rangetoo many of the tracks sound like variations of each other. *Luciana Lopez*

### THE BOOKS

#### LOST AND SAFE

Tomlab/CD/GER

This third album finds The Books delving deeper into the world of song. Not that this is a traditional singer/songwriter record by any means, but it is a different animal than their giddy, sample-driven debut, *Thought for Food*. The Books’ Nick Zammuto and cellist Paul de Jong no longer serve their samples sliced and diced *en masse*; instead, they employ them more sparingly, using snippets of eccentric dialogue and field recordings as lyrical and rhythmic fodder for their often ingenious and painstakingly crafted songs. The result is less overtly scintillating, but offers its own uniquely melancholic pleasures. *Susanna Bolle*

### THE CARS ARE THE STARS

#### FRAGMENTS

Chez Moi/US/CD

It’s always interesting when indie rock bands try their hand at ambient atmospheric. France’s The Cars Are Stars—formerly known as Playdoh, but Hasbro shut that down—offers one of those efforts. Most of *Fragments* is dreamy as hell; some pieces, like “Ardor,” are stunning in their fastidious attention to the tiniest sonic detail (check the barely-audible scraping sounds). Unfortunately, the chunky vocal tracks are less engaging. Nostalgia flows freely on this album, and it does its work: *Fragments* makes you long for a place you’ve been—or maybe somewhere that you haven’t been yet. *Janet Tzou*

### COPYWRITE

#### CRUISE CONTROL

Nature Sounds/US/CD

#### DEEP THINKERS

#### NECKS MOVE

Datura/US/CD

When Copywrite says “All I wanna do is make Gs” on “Official Bangers,” the Ohio-based MC gives away more than he realizes: there’s no mention of making good music, and it shows. These 27 cuts (with intro, outro, and station ID) move at an ADHD speed but rarely find original ground; it’s mainly bitches, beat-downs, and booze. Yawn. Copywrite spits fast and furious without actually saying much. In contrast, Deep Thinkers asks “What is hip-hop today?” on “Burn ‘Em Up,” an indictment of the genre’s pre-dominant focus on bitches, beat-downs, and booze. Deep Thinkers’ answer? Fresher beats, better production, and originality—a lot better than *Cruise Control*. *Luciana Lopez*

### DUB SYNDICATE

#### PURE THRILLSEEKERS

Shanachie/US/CD

On *Pure Thrillseekers*, the “world’s greatest dub band” provides the sonic backdrop for some of reggae’s finest vocalists. Cornell Campbell returns to classic form on “Tricks” and Gregory Isaacs sings a sufferer’s song on “Kingston 14,” but Luciano steals the show with his plaintive “One In A Million.” Lest you think the band has forsaken their name, the album features a number of brilliant dubs. “Guns & Cocaine Crime” incorporates digital sounds alongside a country harmonica and minimal vocals from Jah Bless, and “Private Dub” is an even sexier mix of Isaacs’ “Night Nurse” sequel “Private Secretary.” *Ross Hogg*

### DUBBLE D

#### REACHIN’ OUT

20:20 Vision/UK/CD

Danny Ward (Dubble D) knows drums. From the crisp four-on-the-floor disco on “Super Hi” to jazzy, brushed breaks on “Big Fish” to the swinging, rim-shot driven “Switch,” with Flora Purim working her vocal magic, Dubble D flexes the skills he’s honed during well over a decade of session drumming. Not surprisingly, he’s made a few friends during his career, and many of them show up for this album—Nightmares on Wax, Canadian singer Kate Rogers, and hip-hoppers Qball and Curt Cazal all do their thing on this solid debut, which takes in all styles of groove. *Peter Nicholson*

### ABE DUQUE

#### SO UNDERGROUND IT HURTS

International Deejay Gigolos/GER/CD

Hollis, Queens’ Abe Duque is something of a rare bird: he’s a NYC techno DJ/producer who’s held steadfastly true—for over two decades—to a genre with a troubled club history in his fair city. Like the man himself, Duque’s new album is also something of a techno rarity: it’s a cohesive tale told with all the refined nuances of a master storyteller. *So Underground It Hurts* practically bursts with old-school affection, showing not only Duque’s trademark sense of humor and his delight in manipulating mood, but also a deep, abiding love for and obsession with his beloved techno—here displayed unabashedly in all its groovy, rump-shaking glory. *Janet Tzou*



### MONTAG

#### ALONE. NOT ALONE

Carpark/US/CD

Antoine Bédard plays well with others. As Montag (pronounced “mahn-taj”), he flies solo but invites some friends over for a gorgeous romp through redefined orchestral pop. Among the many along for the ride are May Millan (Stars, Broken Social Scene) on vocals and Francis Amireault (Broadcast) on bass; their guest turns expand various aspects of Montag’s oeuvre, which falls somewhere between M83’s towering walls of sound and the delicate tendencies of Four Tet in his less abstract moments. *Alone.Not Alone* is a rich and intricate—but joyfully catchy—place to be. *Peter Nicholson*

**EDAN**

**BEAUTY AND THE BEAT**

Lewis/US/CD

Drawing a link between the psych-folk of Pearls Before Swine and the fast rap of Percee P is a formidable challenge. *Beauty and the Beat*, the impossibly ambitious sophomore release from Edan, amalgamates these two genres with deft symmetry while maintaining an album-wise cohesion. Moving away from the heavy Marley Marl beats that dominated his debut—and distancing himself from the self-appointed moniker “the Quincy Jones of lo-fi”—his production now resembles the sonic assault of Phil Spector or the foreboding doom of David Axelrod. Earnest and reverential encyclopedic odes to hip-hop and prog rock act as an anti-“Losing My Edge.” As psychedelic as Mythos, and as unrelenting as the UltraMagnetic MCs, Edan is a master in possession of his own style, both lyrically and production-wise. Simply put, this is one of the best and most original records to come out this decade. *Nick Follett*

**ELUVIUM**



**OCTAVE ONE**

**OCTAVE ONE  
THE THEORY OF EVERYTHING**

430 West/US/CD

Long-time fans may find this album a bit confusing, but if you've heard Octave One's 2000 hit “Blackwater” you might have seen this coming. Departing from their trademark deep-strings-and-heroin-style Detroit techno, the duo moves into the new territory of... everything? Seemingly tired of being ignored in their own country, the brothers Burden show off their diversity by making solid stabs at R&B, house, hip-hop, booty bass, and yes (later on), techno—along the way, they connect the dots of black American music. One can't fault them the effort; let us hope this album garners them some of the Stateside attention they so richly deserve. *Alex Posell*

**TALK AMONGST THE TREES**

Temporary Residence/US/CD

Seattle guitarist/pianist Matthew Cooper (Eluvium) is becoming one of the most adept ambienceurs of this young decade. His third release, *Talk Amongst The Trees*, conjures an expansive pathos with a minimalist's economy of means. This eight-track disc alludes to some of history's most sublime dronemeisters, but never blatantly replicates them. The mournful, mellifluous swells of “Show Us Our Homes,” for example, obliquely evoke William Basinski's elegiac symphonies to decay, while “Calm Of The Cast-Light Cloud” sends gorgeous My Bloody Valentine-shaped whorls of emotional ambiguity skyward. Poignant enough to rub microtones with Eno's beatless classics, *Trees* stands tall among the era's elite sound paintings. *Dave Segal*

**FISCHERSPOONER**

**ODYSSEY**

Capitol/US/CD

Since their 2000 release on DJ Hell's International DeeJay Gigolo label, Fischerspooner's full-length debut #1 has been played, played over, and overplayed. Three years since the album's domestic re-release, the duo of Warren Fischer and Casey Spooner return, meaning to reveal themselves as more than undulating Moroder marauders fixated on yelping artifice. For the most part—with input from Mirwais, Nicholas Vernhes, Tony Hoffer, and Linda Perry—they succeed. *Odyssey* is a more melodically and methodically nuanced album, but it doesn't stray so far from Fischerspooner's synth-flutter flecked trademark as to lose fans. The collaborations actually seem to imbue the work with more nebulous filament; drawing from foundational prog-rock sources makes Fischerspooner's *Odyssey* a less hollow and more rewarding quest. *Tony Ware*

**GENERAL PATTON VS. THE X-ECUTIONERS**

Ipecac/US/CD

What the hell does Mike Patton need the X-Men for? The former Faith No More/Mr. Bungle frontman exhales more ideas than the three DJs who crab-and flare scratch. Here, Rob Swift, Roc Raida, and Total Eclipse are the straight men. This is Patton's show as he shotgun-fires Bungle-style schizophrenia; his outbursts of live funk instrumentation and samples of thrift-shop kitsch are perverted enough for cultists to memorize for years to come. Not every idea works—his R&B moments sound forced and his Cro-Magnon grumbles are only redeeming for a few scratches. Yet, Patton's restlessness never ceases to inspire. *Cameron Macdonald*

**GREYSKULL**

**DEADLIVERS**

Rhymesayers/US/CD

These guys are like a baby Wu-Tang, but even younger than that, like when Wu-Tang was just a sperm and an egg, or a good idea not yet realized. This is altogether a masterful flashback to 1998, so if that's your favorite era in hip-hop, this will also be an album after your heart. With analog crackling production and lots of references to biblical characters and samurais, Greyskull wants to make horror rap so badly they threaten that you'll “feel [this rap] in your bone marrow,” and rhyme “this planet was my child and I killed him/gave birth to his death now it's time to reveal him,” which ends up sounding not scary at all. You'll like them for the same reason you can criticize them, because they're like a premature Wu-Tang, who even at that age probably rocked the womb. *Stacey Dugan*

**HANA HAÏS**

**ROSANOVA**

Atal/FRA/CD

Hais' debut proves the obvious: deep house sounds great in French. Of course, it never hurts a vocalist when Chicago house legend Larry Heard produces your first single; in this case, the understated, excellent “Il Parlait Pas Français.” Hais also wrote all the tracks on the album, and her talent is obvious, from the expressive “Je Ne Veux Plus Être Ta Reine” to the accordion-driven “Rosa Nova.” For the unconvinced, a second disc of remixes and dubs gives one last chance to appreciate her. It's hard to tell whether the album succeeds because of her voice or the impressive production values, but either way—it works. *Luciana Lopez*

**HE CAN JOG**



**NEW GROUND HAS NOT BROKEN, SOIL LAST WEEK AND DIRT TODAY**

Fork Series/SPA/CD

Erik Schoster's debut album seemed to be passable blues for those in a pajama'd fetal position, until I heard a track that is virtually nothing but FM static. “Go On, Temple, Said a Stout Ruddy Student Near Him. I'll Stand You a Pint After” is lathered in a technicolored buzz that broadcasts images of a year in a day. Thereafter, in “So Many Words,” this Wisconsinian adjusts the static to unravel snaps that flicker on the beat before rapper Noah Wark's rather conventional glitch-hop soliloquy kicks in. Elsewhere, Schoster and his seven collaborators all display good charcoal sketches desperately in need of color. Let's hope that our man never fixes his radio, just adjusts the dial slightly. *Cameron Macdonald*

**HECATE**

**SEVEN VEILS OF SILENCE**

HECQ

**SCATTERHEART**

Hymen/GER/CD

*Seven Veils* builds goth industrial out of jangling Mediterranean strings, programmed hand drums, and metal-on-metal percussion. When she sets aside the melodramatic tone, Hecate throws down some pretty serious breakbeats. Her project is saved by her unusual approach to sound, whereas the similarly-named HECQ has stripped his album of nearly all content and melody, leaving *only* his production aesthetic. Ominous drones build, then end abruptly, leaving staticky treble beats. Within a single track some elements are incredibly hi-fi and others sound recorded off an answering machine. HECQ achieves impressive results by peeling away other elements, revealing steep canyons of sound. *Ben Bush*

**HEZEKIAH**

**HURRY UP & WAIT**

Soul Spazm/US/CD

The man behind the Beat Society producer roundtables, Philly rapper/producer Hezekiah makes music somewhat akin to Jay Dee's downtempo, neo-soul-ish hip-hop, and his debut album sounds somewhat like J Dilla's



**MAD PROFESSOR AND SLY & ROBBIE**

**CRAZY CARIBS**

**DANCEHALL DUBS**

RAS/US/CD

The Crazy Caribs (Mafia & Fluxy, Sly & Robbie, and the Mad Professor) use their super powers for good on this disc, which is comprised almost entirely of dub interpretations of the biggest riddims and hip-hop cuts of the past year or so. The steel drums of 50 Cent's “P.I.M.P.” get a proper deportation to the West Indies on “50 Pence Dub” (made even more sexy by a pulsating bassline), and a haunting piano line transforms “Coolie Dance” to “Bengali Dancehall Dub.” The steel-drums-as-vocal-line substitution works on “Girl From Lahore” (their rendition of Dave Kelly's massive “Fiesta” riddim); this has the potential to bore after several tracks, but generally speaking, these guys know when to pull back. All in all, the album does what good dub should do; offer reinterpretation of tracks that are as original as the originals. *Ross Hogg*

Jay Tripwire

Mystics of Tomorrow

A deep tribal journey through San Francisco's dub-influenced underground. The best of Jah Love Recordings, mixed by Jay Tripwire.

Featuring tracks by: Jay Tripwire, Patrick Turner, Halo/DJ Duane, Dub Theory, Sen-Sei, David Coleman, Lyon St. Dub, Razoof & Naz.

In stores on April 14, 2005.



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solo record *Welcome 2 Detroit*—without the random forays into things like samba and Kraftwerkian electro. While multi-layered productions like the Pete Rock-ish “Gypsy Slang” sound good enough to stand alone as instrumentals, I can’t help but longing for more guest spots from folks like Grand Agent, Chief Kamachi, Bahamadia, and Stiffed’s Santi White in place of Hezekiah’s Will.I.Am-like rhymes. *Jesse Serwer*

**KAOS**  
**HELLO STRANGER**  
1K7/US/CD

Play DJ Kaos’ leftfield disco LP *Hello Stranger* in its entirety and watch what happens to your party. The Berliner first indulges in Italo-house with ladykiller-son-to-be-wife-beater vocals, before an agitfunk band leads a horde inside to drink all of the free booze. His obligatory cowbells and placement of bold quotation marks upon the lyrics (as heard in “Boogie Boy”) are on the DFA tip, but self-awareness is moot here—even the half-arsed Frankie “Double Dutch Bus” Smith impression in the ‘86 computer expo funk tune “Juices (Raw and Dirty)” brims with pride. The closer, “Bunny Brown,” finds an organ assuring a droning bass guitar that everything will be fine in heaven—a benign blues for the afterlife’s casualties. *Cameron Macdonald*

**LIVING LEGENDS**  
**CLASSIC**

Legendary Music/US/CD  
Unlike most long-running extended hip-hop crews, the Bay Area’s Living Legends still seem to really enjoy working together. Just one year after their more compilation-like *Creative Differences*, Murs, The Grouch, Eligh, and company return with a more collaborative effort, produced primarily by Eligh and with an average of five MCs on each cut. While the opening, the Madlib-produced “Blast Your Radio,” is the undisputed highlight, Eligh’s Kanye-on-crack beat for “Tears and Pain” and the lyrical introspection of “When I’m Gone” make *Classic* a more consistent, if not better, effort than Wu-Tang, Freestyle Fellowship, Hieroglyphics, or Boot Camp’s last group albums. *Jesse Serwer*

**L. PIERRE**  
**TOUCHPOOL**  
Melodic/UK/CD

As one half of Arab Strap, Aidan Moffat has spent nearly an entire decade exploring a seemingly inexorable downcast that starkly contrasts the buoyancy of his second full-length as L. Pierre. Although still an entirely instrumental affair, *Touchpool* features a collection of live players who greatly transform the minimal spine of drum and orchestral loops into massively overwhelming classical ambient recordings. Theatrical yet never ostentatious, the record becomes more substantive with each successive listen, as the slowly swelling strings and fixed breaks reach points of near-unnerving hypnotism. With *Touchpool*, Moffat hasn’t just succeeded in composing cinematic music. He’s actually captured picture-less cinema. *Steve Marchese*

**MARS BLACK**  
**FOLKS MUSIC**

Team Love/US/CD  
Coming out of Nebraska, where “all we got is beef,” Omaha rapper Mars Black has a credibility gap before he even opens his mouth. Dropping his debut on Team Love—a label co-owned by emo wunderkind Conor Oberst—doesn’t help. But Mars doesn’t deny his hometown has more cornhuskers than cornrows as he drops

witty lines about the Midwest while rapping about universal themes. Occasionally, Mars gets muddled in backpacker clichés or stuck on DJ/producer E. Babbs’ stale beats, and things sound as flat as a cornfield. But his skills make this a respectable first effort, not just some cuts from the country. *Patrick Sisson*

**THE MIGHTY ZULU NATION**  
**ABANTU**  
Nation/UK/CD

No, this isn’t a new album by Afrika Bambaataa’s extended family; it’s the debut album from a traditional, yet progressive-minded, vocal choir from Durban, South Africa who happen to call themselves the Mighty Zulu Nation. Aligning themselves with Nation Records and producer Aki Nawaz, MZN has created one of the world beat albums of the year, if not the decade. Blending spirited vocal harmonies (à la Ladysmith Black Mambazo) with tablas, dhols, and dholaks, Abantu reunifies the lost continent of Pangaea with often-joyous rhythms. The combination of Asian and African sensibilities delivers a culturally rich musical feast, one that seems even more impressive for the lack of overt Westernization. Nawaz programs beats on four tracks, but that’s an almost superfluous conceit on a record that has plenty of rippling bass without electronic meddling. Eric K. Arnold

**TONYA MORGAN**  
**SUNLIGHTING**  
Loud Minority/US/CD

If nothing else, rap trio Tonya Morgan accomplishes a seemingly impossible feat on their Sunlighting mixtape—making you like ‘90s hit “Rico Suave” again, or maybe for the first time. Rapping over “Rico Suave” and the beats of B.G.’s “Bling Bling” and House of Pain’s “Jump Around,” Tonya Morgan owns the music with a refreshing mix of romance, reflection, bravado, and good ole’ fashion mackin’. The disc’s highlight, “She Moved Out of Cincy,” is the tale of an ill-fated romance between a young man willing to settle down and a girl with a few skeletons in her closet. *Sunlighting* is available for free download at www.loudminoritymusic.com *Sabrina Ford*

**MOUNT SIMS**  
**WILD LIGHT**

International DJ Gigolo/GER/CD  
Mount Sims has unearthed the classic New Wave dirge and given it an entirely new life. Sims pairs the melancholy, synth sound that made old school goth so mesmerizing (Bauhaus’ David J lends a hand to the LP) with the resonant rhythms of electronica, dub’s tripping tempos, and the meandering melodies of ambient to create a synthesis that, like the work of his musical predecessors, is as romantic and reminiscent as it is futuristic. The only thing that makes *Wild Light* a throwback is that it’s equal parts style and substance. *Carla Costa*


**BJ NILSEN**  
**FADE TO WHITE**  
Touch/UK/CD

BJ Nilsen *steams* noise. His humidifier drones, piercing microtones, and warehouse din all evaporate into the raw air—leaving one’s vague memories to recall phantom sounds that never actually existed. *Fade to White* could soundtrack a bedridden life in a cinder block apartment next to a foundry. Most of Nilsen’s orchestrations dwell on gestures slight enough for the imagination to fill in the rest. “Dead Reckoning” is an exception, where a lava flow of distortion bleeds into




**BAH SAMBA**


**BAH SAMBA 4**  
BKO Productions/UK/CD  
Light on the samba, but loaded with that spirit nonetheless, *Bah Samba 4* is a two-disc set split between thick bass and funk and tropically-fueled downtempo, and featuring outstanding vocals. Disc one opens with “Portuguese Love” and string stabs straight out of the ‘70s; in contrast, the second CD opens with the bossa-inflected guitar of “Inner Soul.” This Brit collective keeps a similar dichotomy throughout. While “You! You! You!” features full-throated vocals belted against tireless funk, “Don’t Let Them Get You Down” croons sweetly and warmly. The group’s at their best when they let it rip, as on “Everybody Get Up,” but there are slips: the almost acapella track “So Many People” tries too hard for depth but comes off sleepy. More promising is “Morris”—its combination of suave strings and gentle vocals make it the kind of track that wills you to close your eyes and dream. *Luciana Lopez*




**COUNT BASS D**  
**Begborrowsteel**  
Count Bass D's first full release since 2002's universally acclaimed *Dwight Spitz*.




**LJ'S**  
Debut release from Defari and DJ Bobu's latest group.



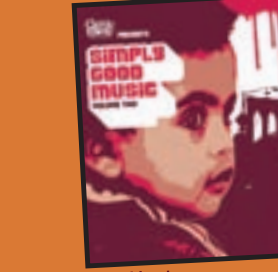
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A rare recording from an incredible MF Doom live performance featuring classic cuts from albums like *Operation Dooomsday*, *Madvillain* and *MMM...Food*.



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14 ultra-rare gems from the late '60s and '70s, compiled by Tobias Hirmayer.



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**In Stores Now**

**USA Tour Dates**

03/15	Los Angeles, CA	"Fabric20 Instore DJ Set/Signing" @ Amoeba Music Hollywood (8.30pm) The Mayan Theatre Element Rufy Sky
03/16	Los Angeles, CA	"Fabric20 Instore DJ Set/Signing" @ Spec's (8.30pm)
03/18	Seattle, WA	"Ultra After Party" @ American Airlines Arena
03/19	San Francisco, CA	Axis
03/23	WMC in Miami, FL	Soundbar
03/26	WMC in Miami, FL	"Fabric20 Instore DJ Set/Signing" @ Virgin Union Square (8.00pm)
03/29	Boston, MA	Crober
03/30	Chicago, IL	Eleven 50
03/31	New York, NY	
04/01	New York, NY	
04/02	Atlanta, GA	

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"A blistering, up to the minute hip hop / breaks mix, expertly blended by Fabric's hot test young resident DJ. Featuring some of British urban music's most exciting talent including current heroes like M.L.A., Ty, Dizzeo, Rascal, Roots Manuva, and Rodney P rubbing up to London's right-time movers All B, Zinc, Teyo, Stanton Warriors, and Plus One."



**In Stores 19th April**

"Fabric21 is an energetic blend of jacking house, with firm beats but plenty of wiggle. With an infectious groove running throughout there's bumping tracks from DJ Jaz, 2 Or More, Mario Fabiani, Kaskadee, her own Blackcherry signing DJ Mes, Mike Delgado and Max Remi, as Heather skillfully weaves around organic instrumentals and uplifting melodies."

**USA Tour Dates**

03/23	Miami	"Smart Bar Chicago Presents..." @ Marlin Hotel
03/23	Miami	"As One" Blackcherry Label Launch Party @ Empire
03/24	Miami	"Remix Hotel" @ Eden Rock Resort
03/24	Miami	"Syntax Event" @ Astor Hotel
03/25	Miami	"Miami Rubdown V2" All World Agency Event @ Bash
03/25	Miami	"The Goods" Nordic Trax Event @ St Augustine Hotel
04/21	Chicago	"Fabric21 Instore DJ Set/Signing" @ Virgin Records (5.00pm)
04/23	Chicago	"Fabric21 Album Launch Party" @ Smart Bar

Coming Soon: Meat Katie, Adam Bayer, Scratch Perverts, Ivan Smaggha, Death In Vegas, Ricardo Villalobos, Tiefenschwarz, Flump D.B., Available on compact disc from all good stores or for £6 by subscribing to the series via the fabric website.

the hymns of machines. This is music as an ether-soaked mask.  
*Cameron Macdonald*

**NOMO**

Ypsilanti/US/CD  
The recent interest in Afrobeat has yielded a plethora of music varying in degrees of talent (from master musicians to flailing amateurs) and points of origin (Nigeria, Ghana, Brooklyn). What sets Detroit's Nomo apart from the sea of indistinguishable Fela-lite groups is the sound. Owing to production by His Name is Alive's Warn Defever, they sound like a band with compositions rather than a funk band with an extra percussionist jamming. Subtly shifting time signatures and grooves, and outfitted with more than capable soloists, Nomo sounds fresh in an otherwise saturated market. *Nick Follett*

**OUT HUD  
LET US NEVER SPEAK OF IT AGAIN**

Kranky/US/CD  
You gotta love this whole "making over disco via a post-punk spit shine" thing, and Out Hud are old pros. Since their first release in 1998, the band has streamlined and tweaked out their sound one track at a time, finally settling on a solid groove with their second LP. Grounded in the amped-up pulse of the high-hat and the split lead female vocals, the album's best tracks ("Old Nude," "How Long") are dreamy, irresistible dance pop numbers with enough substance (yes, that *is* a cello) to keep even the avant garde wallflowers interested in the beats. *Carla Costa*

**SAVAS PASCALIDIS  
DISKO VIETNAM**

International Deejay Gigolo/GER/CD  
Savas Pascalidis has his sound and he's sticking to it. Unfortunately, this means that if you already have his previous album, 2002's *Intergalactic Gigolo*, this follow-up is only necessary if you want more of the same. Exactly the same. Each of these 13 tracks is aimed squarely at the dancefloor and, though undoubtedly effective, they each go about their task in an almost identical manner. The one exception to this is "U Can Do It If You Dance;" a slower, slinkier track, designed with the snake-hipped firmly in mind, its acid gurgles and intoning vocal are impossible to resist. *Dave Stenton*

**MARCO PASSARANI  
SULLEN LOOK**

Peacefrog/UK/CD  
Not content with running three of the best electronic labels going (Pigna, Nature, and Final Frontier), veteran Italian producer Marco Passarani signals his arrival on Peacefrog with one of the year's first great albums. *Sullen Look* sees the Rome resident merge the Detroit influences that informed his initial productions almost a decade ago with the currently hotter-than-horseradish electro sounds emerging from Dutch strongholds such as the Clone and Den Haag camps; there's even a track dedicated to I-F's irrepressible Internet radio station ("C-B-S Master Theme"). Two brilliant cover versions—of Alexander O'Neal's "Criticize" (with Erlend Øye on vocals) and Jungle Brothers' "I'll House You"—will have your jaw on the floor. *Dave Stenton*

**PELLARIN  
ATHEN**

Statler & Waldorf/DEN/CD  
Shhhh, something's happening here. Something so slyly quiet, a simple blink of the ear or wistful nod of the eye and you might miss the tantalizing twinkle of ringing dub, clicking like crickets through a delicately reverberated horizon of haze. *Athen's* integrity of sound and electronic distinction calls into question the location of where process informs product. Brilliantly crafted utilizing a single sample and a customized delay set up, Pellarin expands upon an aesthetic popularized by Chain Reaction but transforms it into his own particularly illuminating blend. *Brian Paul*

**PLAT**

**COMPULSION**

Unschooler/US/CD  
Through mysterious means, Iceland's Arnar Helgi Adalsteinsson and Vilhjalmur Pálsson have captured the lonely, pathos-laden aura of sparsely populated towns in the American Southwest. Plat's deft use of space, reverb, and hyper-intricate percussion enables them to conjure poignantly cinematic soundscapes that recall A Small Good Thing and Icarus. Subtlety guides Plat through their 10-track debut album, as they seamlessly mesh organic and electronic elements into elegant compositions. Plat's chops on guitar, bass, drums and computer are impeccable, but not at the expense of emotional depth. *Compulsion* is an accomplished debut that launches Plat to the head of the Icelandic music pack. *Dave Segal*

**PLATNUM  
ROCK ME**

Sonar Kollektiv/GER/CD  
Sonar Kollektiv turns their sights squarely on crossover R&B with this debut from Platnum. Focused on vocalist Ruth Maria Renner, who not only sings but programs beats and produces (with help from DJ Illvibe and Monk), *Rock Me* is somewhat hit or miss. But when it works, like on the bass rumbling and music box tinkling "Sweet City," the slow-burn grind of "Greatest," or the boogie romp of "She Won't Do It," Platnum is as good as gold. *Peter Nicholson*

**PREFUSE 73  
SURROUNDED BY SILENCE**

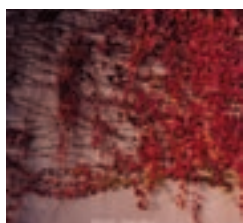
Warp/UK/CD  
What the fuck? Cheesecake cover photo and MCs who cash checks from majors on a Prefuse 73 joint? Yep, Ghostface and GZA appear as do many sterling indie rappers (Beans, El-P, Aesop Rock) and musicians (Tyondai Braxton, The Books), but *Surrounded By Silence* is undeniably Prefuse 73's show. Scott Herren's orchestral, camera-shutter funk has become familiar, but it's still potent. "I've Said All I Need To Say About Them Intro" kills it from the jump with astral-sexual, futuristic funk featuring warped vibes and smeared videogame FX. The rest of *Silence* finds Prefuse crafting both his most accessible tracks (Ghost/El-P-laced "Hideyface" and the Camu-fronted "Now You're Leaving") and his weirdest ("Ty Versus Detchibe," "And I'm Gone"). This is a brilliant culmination of Prefuse's career to date. *Dave Segal*

**SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN  
STRONG FOR THE FUTURE**

Mush/US/CD  
More often than not, electronic music is characterized as the language of machines. Yet for Scientific American (sound designer Andrew Rohmann), the process by which music is manufactured doesn't necessarily determine its character. With a rich history rooted in the Northwest indie rock and the clear influence of touring mates Dabrye and Boom Bip, Rohmann expertly weaves his varied styles—freely flowing and artfully attenuated—into a singular work of considerably skillful songwriting. And although *Strong for the Future* is often cloaked by a thin layer of machine-borne crackles and snaps, it should nonetheless be measured by an accessibility that simply transcends genre. *Steve Marchese*

**SIR ALICE  
N° 2**

Tigersushi-Kwaidan/FRA/CD  
Sir Alice's exploration of technoid art rock is head-scratchingly obtuse at moments, fearlessly self-indulgent at others. This is not a good thing. "La Maitresse" drones on endlessly in digitized French, "Technotronic" sounds like Kid606 screwing with Cibo Matto samples, and "L'homme Qui Vient D'en Bas" is just plain scary. Yet all is not lost—"Ballad" sends PJ Harvey-esque moaning through a fun-house effects processor, "Bouda" succeeds mightily with its electropunk recklessness, and "Onanisme" has

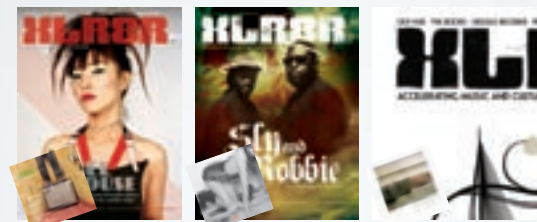


**LIKWIT JUNKIES  
THE L.J.'S  
ABB/US/CD**

No MC is truly complete without a trusty DJ minding his back. On *The L.J.'s*, the Likwit Crew's Defari and Beat Junkie and Dilated Peoples member DJ Babu mingle their specialties: pointed lyricism and nattily constructed beats, respectively. Defari's intellectually leaning verses are bolstered by Babu's varied beats, from the fuzzy key tickles of "LJ's Anthem" to the bebop chops of "Brother." A hefty 17 full tracks might intimidate some, but Defari keeps things interesting by diversifying his topics; Cali gets bigged up on "Salute," cautionary tales are kicked on "Change," and crooked cops are scorned on "One Time." The occasional instrumentals Babu tacks onto the tail end of tracks are a nice touch. Like the LA river, the LJ's are deep, broad, and flow ruggedly through an urban landscape. *Aqua Boogie*

“Who the fuck are we?  
Who the fuck are you?!”  
Read XLR8R.”  
—Phyllis, Out Hud

PHOTO Jessica Miller CLOTHING American Apparel customized by Molly and Phyllis of Out Hud



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**XLR8R incite**

a dark, lusty quality that's almost cinematic in feel, but it's certainly not enough to save *N° 2* from the rubbish bin. *Christine Hsieh*

**ALEX SMOKE**  
**INCOMMUNICADO**  
Soma/SCOT/CD

If Soma label chiefs and tech-house producers Stuart McMillan and Orde Meikle ever had a wet dream for their musical successor, the often-dubbed "producer's producer," Alex Smoke is it. Smoke fits snugly as the missing piece of McMillan and Meikle's family puzzle, particularly as a next-generation Slam (McMillan and Meikle's well-minted production name). Like Slam, Smoke's winds his techno and tech-house into tight, minimalistic funk. But Smoke's pieces also play with rougher elements like glitch ("Brian's Lung") and experimental noise, slicing up his sweeping trance overtones. Check "Passing Through" to marvel at how organic a simple blip can sound. *Janet Tzou*

**SONOGRAM**  
**SUBSTRATES**  
Simulacra/US/CD

It's sometimes an artist's earliest creations that exude the most truthful emotion. *Substrates* is adrip with this fresh authenticity, showcasing Todd Gautreau's early, pre-*Heartbeat Submarines* ambient works. The shifting static tides of "The Lonely Acrobats" and cerebral piano meanderings that resonate through tracks like "This Place Has No Memories" are indicative of his seamless fusion of rich, organic instrumentation and lush, pixelated soundscapes. Guided by their own inner pulse and the filtered echoes of

distant industry, each track is a magnetic flux of cinematic imagery and dreamstate architecture that modestly sidesteps any plugged-in flamboyance in favor of sincere, introspective programming. *Doug Morton*

**SONY MAO**  
**PLAY ULTRA-RED**  
**ULTRA-RED**  
**ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION**  
**PLAY LOS JORNALEROS DEL NORTE**  
Public Record/US/CD

Political activism isn't something that's usually taken very seriously with electronic music. But for over a decade, the Ultra-Red coalition (formerly AIDS activists) has wrought their experimental pieces from a political drive and a love for sonic pastiche. Their albums—less music in a traditional sense than sound-art compositions—champion everything from fair-use internet rights (including free downloads) to Latino immigrant workers navigating the admittedly strange land of Los Angeles. It's all great stuff for the imagination, and heartening to know that sometimes activism can be the next great thing you hear. *Janet Tzou*

**ROBERT STRAUSS**  
**ROBERT STRAUSS**  
**SQUARE ONE**  
**FIELD GENTIAN**  
Freerange/UK/CD

These albums neatly illustrate two sides to Freerange's winning vision of dance music. Canadian Robert Strauss delivers a sprawling debut (17 songs in 65 minutes) that explores various permutations of disco and funk, from the bouncy house of "Do It Up" to the mid-tempo swagger of "Rhythm of Life." Back in Manchester, Mark Wadsworth (a.k.a. Square One) blocks his way into the future with cleanly broken beats on "Maillot Jaune" and popping, minimal strut on "Quick Step" (I think someone's a cycling fan with those titles.) Pick either—your dancing shoes will be glad you did. *Peter Nicholson*

**SUPERSYSTEM**  
**ALWAYS NEVER AGAIN**  
Touch & Go/US/CD

Formerly known as El Guapo, this outfit has experimented its way from free jazz to dance jams, but maybe the name change means they've achieved a fusion that incorporates all their tinctures. *Always Never Again* melds frantic tempos into samba beats shaped by angular riffs, and takes herky-jerky bass bumper beats and weaves them with treble-heavy-Middle Eastern guitar lines. The mix up is fun but the sound gets so bogged down with the mash-up of elements (synthetic spaz rock, dancehall, pop punk) that its textures start sounding contrived. A fun record, just one that's a little too self-conscious. *Carla Costa*

**TARENTEL**  
**PAPER WHITE/BIG BLACK SQUARE**  
Temporary Residence/US/CD

Essentially a companion piece to last year's stellar *We Move Through Water* LP, this compilation of EPs highlights an abundance of engaging material from these post-rock veterans. Seemingly capable of coaxing any number of complex emotions out of even the most jaded listener, Tarentel touts an inherent knowledge of the devastating possibilities of sound and instrumentation. From the delicately majestic unfurling of "Paper White" to the sprawling ramshackle of the 43-minute "Big Black Square," Tarentel displays a mastery of

craft that's nothing short of perfect. *Brian Paul*

**TARWATER**  
**THE NEEDLE WAS TRAVELING**  
Morr Music/GER/CD

Tarwater's 1998 release *Silur* threw me for a most thrilling loop. Its combination of spare, atmospheric electronics, guitar, and understated-to-the-point-of-deadpan vocals—with lyrics culled from Cousteau and other unlikely sources—was pure auditory butter. The needle has traveled a long way since then and Tarwater is now a much more conventional art-pop band. Their sophisticated, slightly off-kilter songs still swing and mesmerize; however, they offer little in the way of revelation. *Susanna Bolle*

**TELESCOPE**  
**ZOOM**  
Combination/GER/CD

This unexpected gem of an album instantly recalls the laidback, jazz-licked downbeat of the late '90s Eastern European scene, the tender glitch-house of Matthew Herbert, and the minimalist aesthetic of Steve Bug as it moves gently through warm, full-bodied, mid-tempo tunes flecked with bongo drums and delicate acoustic guitar. Far from hands-in-the-air dancefloor stuff, this album appeals primarily on the cerebral level. This is all the more interesting, given that the standout track, "The Horse," has one of the more bizarre lyrics in dance music today—a fault turned into a feature once that luscious bassline rolls in. *Christine Hsieh*

**MIA DOI TODD**  
**MANZANITA**  
Plug Research/US/CD

Mia Doi Todd has never been the type of artist people "kind of" like. With her operatic voice and uncomfortably intimate songwriting, one either finds her singularly under-appreciated or dismisses her as an over-hyped LA hipster. *Manzanita* will do little to dissuade either. Backing by fellow scenesters, including members of Beachwood Sparks, The Tyde, and Brian Jonestown Massacre, lends an AM pop and countrified folk tinge (à la Sandy Denny or Colin Blunstone) replete with strings and horns. Despite all these special guests, Ms. Todd is at her best when accompanied only by her own guitar. *Nick Follett*

**VENETIAN SNARES**  
**WINNIPEG IS A FROZEN SHITHOLE**  
Sublight/CAN/CD

Hatred spurs Venetian Snares' creative juices on *Winnipeg Is A Frozen Shithole*, as he dishes out nine furious anti-paeans to the Canadian metropolis "chosen by the *London Times* four years in a row as the capital of sorrow." Venetian Snares (Aaron Funk) programs his drums to stun; the ferocity and velocity of his snares, cymbals, and *boinging* kicks seems designed to level Winnipeg's city hall. The prolific Funk's well-honed m.o. comes to demonic fruition on *Winnipeg*. It's a five-dimensional, super-humanly dexterous drill & bass/gabber fusion that leaves you—and the title city—utterly trashed by disc's end. *Dave Segal*

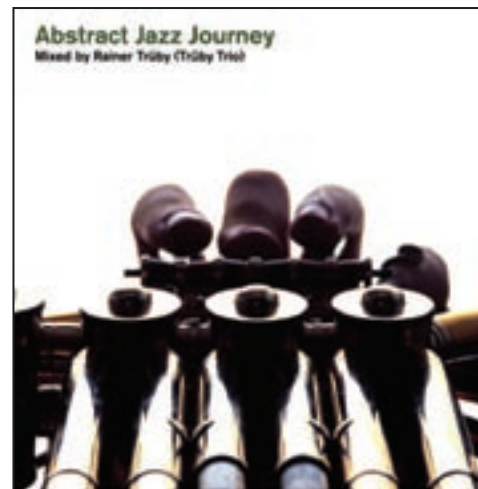
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**JUSTUS KÖHNCKE**

**JUSTUS KÖHNCKE**  
**DOPPELLEBEN**  
Kompakt/GER/CD

Having established himself as the quintessential pop-techno icon of the Kompakt camp, Köhncke unzips his latest full-length effort. *Doppelleben* (translation: "double life") is a veritable smorgasbord of discolicious 4/4 bumpy, metro-sensual symphonics, and acoustified ballads, all of which sizzle with Köhncke's uncanny blend of pop sensibility and digital synthetics. By now, any true fan of Kompakt kulture has come to terms with Köhncke's big-hearted (German) vocals, but those less inclined to sing along with the accompanying lyric sheet can still lose themselves in the meticulously-programmed instrumental half of the album. *Doug Morton*

# VAIN GLORIOUS.



03.29 (SMACKS)

**THE DIX**  
The Art Of Picking Up Women

"Their cataclysmic rhythm and harmonies combined with their explosive dance moves makes the Dix one of the best groups to grace this recording industry." — Gerald Grimsby, Indianapolis Sun Times

CD features unreleased Dix tracks unearthed by Prince Paul. Also includes the retrospective DVD "The Rise and Fall of the Dix".



04.19 (TRACK MODE)

**ANTHONY NICHOLSON**  
Necessary Phases

Best known for his Urban Sound Gallery and African Blues collaborations with Ron Trent, Chicago's Anthony Nicholson makes his Track Mode debut with his own soulful brand of deep house on Necessary Phases.



04.19 (Sound in Color)

**MUMBLES**  
A Book Of Human Beats

Finally available! A Book of Human Beats, Mumbles' instrumental companion album to Aceyalone's classic album, Book of Human Language. A precursor to Mumbles' long-awaited debut album coming in 2005.

"The production is organic and rich, but just ragged enough to sound honest." — Allmusic.com



03.29 (CROSTOWN REBELS)

**DAMIAN LAZARUS**  
Crosstown Rebels presents Rebel Futurism, Session 2

Crosstown Rebels are back with their manifesto for 2005, Rebel Futurism Session Two. Mixed by Rebels mainman Damian Lazarus, ...Session Two is a mixture of underground hits, distinctive delights, and a reminder why we all love dance music in the first place.

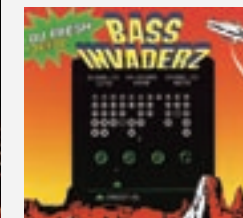
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**DJ FRESH**

## COMP REVIEWS



**DRUM & BASS HANGS IN THE BALANCE. CAN DJ FRESH'S NEW COMP TIP THE SCALES?**

**DJ FRESH: BASS INVADERZ**  
System/US/CD

Electronic music cynics are scratching their heads and wondering how drum & bass still exists in 2005, but the proliferation of jungle labels, club nights, and message boards is proof the genre is still breathing. It does seem, however, that the music needs to transcend its own status quo very soon or d&b is in danger of becoming an antiquated piece of '90s dance music. In the first half of its dozen-year existence, drum & bass saw the birth of sub-genres like liquid funk, techstep, and jump up, but recent times haven't produced as many dramatic evolutions.

DJ Fresh, real name Dan Stein, should be geared up to solve this problem, but understanding why he's eligible for the job requires viewing Stein's resume. Here's a man whose Bad Company UK crew (Stein and fellow DJ/producers Maldini, Vegas, and D-Bridge) played a huge role in the growth of drum & bass by producing hardstep anthems like "The Nine" and "Planet Dust." He's the founder of the world's largest d&b forum, Dogs on Acid, and runs the Breakbeat Kaos label alongside Adam F. It's an understatement to say Stein is a major player, thus the weight of the challenge rests heavy on his shoulders.

To Stein's credit, his latest mix *Bass Invaderz* addresses the battle ahead. The opening clip is a dialogue between two characters discussing their fate after a space battle. A challenge is at

hand, the outcome to be determined at the end of these 16 tracks, most of which are dancefloor hits from the last couple years. Big tunes like "Nosher" by Total Science, the MC Conrad vocal-driven "Golden Girl," and a collaboration by Ska and Pendulum exemplify the comp's varied tracklisting. But with the exception of a few brilliant gems like the punchy "Drop It Down" by Calibre and the revving, bassline-driven "Uprising" by Artificial Intelligence, the mix practically drips from the watered-down conventions it's been doused in.

It's the way Stein chooses to mix these tracks that saves things. He darts between the melodic, the pounding, and the effervescent, adding a sense that, while it's true to form jungle throughout, this is no straight shot down a predictable music path. A sweet vocal sometimes precedes a tremulous breakdown and continuous interludes between the two characters cut in and out of the mix, reminding us the battle is not yet won. While the actual music may lack sophistication, the presentation affirms that Stein is innovative enough to remain a step above his contemporaries.

Stein's temporary move to New York (he's back in the UK now) and involvement with American hip-hop artists may aid him as both an artist and an influential figure in the scene. With one foot in jungle and one in the outside world, Stein may yet have a hand in pulling drum & bass off the precipice it's about to fall from, and back into the inner circle of electronic music. *Jenn Marston*

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**COLOUR SERIES 2: BLUE**

Freerange/UK/CD

Freakin' Freerange! Like Strictly Rhythm in the late '80s or Mo' Wax in the early '90s, you can pick up practically any Freerange release and be guaranteed a winner. Here they do the compilation work for you, pulling together selections from label mainstays like Shur-I-Kan and Trevor Loveys plus new (to them) names like Kirk DeGiorgio and King Kooba. What do they all have in common? Shiny, sleek synths, percolating on Atjazz's remix of Subjekt's "Be My Chicago" and warmly enveloping on DeGiorgio's "Cosmic Peasant," huge, rubbery bass drums, pounding relentlessly on Switch's "Get on Downz" and making a warm bed for swinging snares on Brett Johnson's take on Shur-I-Kan's "Generations." Specific sounds aside, these songs all share one important trait—they'll show you hell of a good time. *Peter Nicholson*

**APPLESEED ORIGINAL SOUNDTRACK**

Tofu/CAN/CD

Like anime itself, anime soundtracks run the gamut from the commercially soppy to the edgily outstanding. Fittingly, this soundtrack matches the style of *Appleseed* and its creator, Masamune Shirow (who also created *Ghost in the Shell*). Big names abound, including Basement Jaxx, Oakenfold, and Carl Craig and Adult., whose "Hand To Phone" is a great intersection of Craig's techno skills and Adult.'s paranoia-laced style. The soundtrack also includes Japanese artist Ryuichi Sakamoto, who turns in the distortion-fueled "Coro," and his countrymen Boom Boom Satellites, who contribute four tracks including the driving opener "Dive For You." *Luciana Lopez*

**BUZZIN' FLY VOL. 2**

Astralwerks/US/CD

Ben Watt is so consistently good reviewing him feels too easy—and this house disc is no exception. Here Watt finds that rare balance between awareness and abandon. The ultra-smooth segue of the intro—which melds parts of the Watt-penned "Williamsburg or Harlem" into the deep house-meets-Jamaican vocals of Jerk House Connection's "New York Style"—sets the tone for the disc, which showcases Watt's considerable DJ skills. He nails both the mixing and programming, with tracks like DJ T.'s electro "Time Out" and Nookie's lush "Better Love" culminating in a return to the comp's opening track. *Luciana Lopez*

**ELEKTRABEL: FOR VARIOUS REASONS**

6277/US/2LP

The artist-development branch of Jeff Mills' Axis label, 6277 is fitted with its first full-length LP complements of Czech Republic technician Tomas Hartl (Elektrabel), who has been the imprint's dominant voice thus far. *For Various Reasons* confirms the label's directional success; artl delivers an outstanding double-disc techno array hardwired with brass-tax sequencing and a polished factory edge. Tracks like "Ampule" and "Crocks" serve it up with precision-machined 909 drum programming and cold, hard analog synth robotics while "Count To 18" and "Personal" target the cortex with surgical minimalism and morphing atmospheric cycles. This mission is a go. *Doug Morton*

**FABRIC 19: ANDREW WEATHERALL**

Fabric/UK/CD

Weatherall goes light on the bass and gets, well, acidic, on the Fabric series' latest bouncy techno venture, a quirky but strong zinc rope of a set that links the snotty, lustful electro of Sexual Harassment's "I Need a Freak" to tweakier tech depths, and then brings things back to the surface with Steve Bug's "That Kid," a track that rocks back and forth on its heels. Weatherall zips from record to record with a swift and admirable economy, and what you end up with is a mix that's a fleet-footed, dizzy game of hopscotch. *Selena Hsu*

**FULL BODY WORKOUT**

Get Physical/GER/2xLP

'Bout ready to jack? Good, because these eight tracks are all about getting down. Catwash (Parisians DJ Wild and Christophe Carrier) kicks it off with banging acid and hand claps, while Sweden's Martinez gets ominous with a clicking that starts simple and jerky before building to a nicely swinging match of synth ping pong. Californian ex-pat Chelonis R. Jones builds a moody balance with vocal snatches and murky bass as the Afrilounge collective rocks the cowbell. Simple and sparse, none of these tracks will amaze with technical wizardry, but they are all devastating dancefloor tools. It ain't intellectual—it's Physical. *Peter Nicholson*

**KINGS OF FUNK**

BBE/UK/CD

Funk is a four-letter word, but it's also an attitude, as this crate-diggers' wet dream of a compilation—assembled by RZA and Keb Darge—proves. You'll find Jamaican soul, hard-edged boogaloo, gritty R&B, and jazzy fusion among the funky flavors found here, but none of the ultra-commercial, ultra-clichéd crossover disco anthems that have been paying VH-1's bills for years. The track selection is all killer, no filler, a true "Melting Pot" (to name-check one Booker T & the MGs tune) of emotion-stirring jams and stellar joints from Sly Stone, Anne Peebles, MFSB, Ken Boothe and Quantic, topped off by Lyn Collin's Richter-registering live version of "Do Your Thing." Now *that's* what I call music! *Eric K. Arnold*

**KLYMAXX!**

Greensleeves/UK/CD

With MTV and BET blaring from TV screens all over yard, hip-hop's encroachment on dancehall and Jamaican culture is, for better or worse, at an all-time high. With some slightly altered drum arrangement, Shane Brown's Klymaxx! riddim could pass for the handiwork of Lil' Jon or Jazze Pha; of the 20 acts who take their shot at it, Ward 21 appropriately steals the show by re-interpreting The Roots' "Don't Say Nuthin'" on "Do Your Thing." While the riddim itself is rather faceless, H2O Productions' Slow Bounce lends itself to a number of quality takes, from Bounty Killer's "Pum Pum Mechanic" (certainly the best-titled track in the bunch) to "Call Out Mi Name" from Macka Diamond, who continues to stake her claim as the moment's top female deejay. *Jesse Serwer*

**MARK FARINA: MUSHROOM JAZZ 5**

Om/US/CD

Farina's *Mushroom Jazz* series has proven popular; each disc has presented a consistent, midtempo flow of house and jazz. This album's no different, and that's probably its biggest flaw, if one can call that a flaw. The disc is excellently mixed, on point and subtle and the programming's carefully done; standout tracks include The Strange

Fruit Project's "Maintain," threaded through with a simple jazz piano line, or DJ Numark's "Chali 2na Comin' Thru," featuring vocals from the Jurassic 5 alum. Mark Farina holds his tracks to high standards, meaning this disc has plenty of head-nodding, groove-feeling moments. *Luciana Lopez*

**MUTANT DISCO 3**

Ze/US/CD

The recently revived Ze Records delivers this document of the origins of garage music. Was (Not Was) remixes Bush Sr.'s back-pedaling sound bytes against a prototypical vibraphone groove while Coati Mundi offers exuberant Latin disco. The compilation is in part a love letter to The Paradise Garage, the legendary early '80s New York dance club, and its resident DJ Larry Levan, who birthed the genre out of his eclectic taste in dance music. One is tempted to find an allegory of Levan's illustrious but brief and troubled life in his remix of "There's Something Wrong in Paradise." *Ben Bush*

**POP AMBIENT 2005**

Kompakt/GER/CD

Since 2001, Kompakt has been franchising the most beautiful sounds next to silence—respect to any company that can turn on thousands to rarefied beatless music. Kompakt's potent name recognition means loads of folks can access yearly primers of top-shelf ambience from trusty producers like Gas, Markus Guentner, and Peter Grummich. Lulling lavender odes to amniotic tranquility prevail on *Pop Ambient 2005*, but Klimek brings some amazing guitar-chord dispersion that shimmers like a heat haze and Thomas Fehlmann rises above a strong lineup with a track of iceberg-like majesty, which drifts into this pantheon of slow-motion drone beauty. *Dave Segal*

**SIMPLE ONE (MIXED BY WILL SAUL)**

Simple/UK/CD

Will Saul is the kind of DJ we like 'round these parts: eclectic, versatile, and not afraid to run in different directions; this makes the first compilation from his Simple label so compelling. Mixed by Saul using Ableton Live, *One* is a seamless journey through ambient house, dubby techno, and moody breakbeat, starting off gentle and relaxed with Sideshow's luxurious "Waiting in the Darkness" and taking the long way 'round to a cracking conclusion. Never afraid to break things down after a raucous build-up, Saul peppers the mix with a dense psychedelia that must have something to do with his Glastonbury upbringing. *One* is the kind of mix we need to see more often: unpredictable, engaging, and complex. This time the name *doesn't* say it all. *Mike Battaglia*

**SIMPLY GOOD MUSIC VOLUME TWO**

Giant Step/US/CD

Sure, you could argue that Raphael Saadiq's "I Know Shuggie Otis" is neo-soul, but that would sell it short in a way that the emotional vocals and wailing guitar never would. And you could say that Los Amigos Invisibles' "Esto Es Lo Que Hay" is nothing more than a regaeton *sabor del mes*, but you'd be glossing over the dub-like horns, beautiful harmonies, and delicious *cuica*. But more than any other track, it's "Your Day Is Done" by the Platinum Pied Pipers with Georgia that proves that this compilation's title is perfect: it's all good music, simple as that. *Ross Hogg*

**SOUL JAZZ RECORDS PRESENTS STUDIO ONE DISCO MIX**

Soul Jazz/UK/CD

"Disco Mix" has a dual meaning on this vintage Studio One collection. First, it refers to the popular early '70s Jamaican 10" and 12" single format, where a song plus its dub or a DJ version would be included in one extended mix. Then there's the American soul genre, which inspires a feature of the music contained here. Seventies and '80s icons Alton Ellis and Sugar Minott feature here alongside lesser-known acts like Norma White, who shines on her remake of Chic's "I Want Your Love." But it's Willie Williams' top-ranking tune "Armigideon Time" that still lives on, albeit mostly as an x-rated dub plate for warring sound-systems ("A lot of sound-boy nah get no p—y tonight.") More bang for your buck, indeed! *Araya Crosskil*

**TEETH**

Statler & Waldorf/DEN/CD

So many words, inked and verbalized, preciously trace the influence of hip-hop upon electronics, particularly in IDM. Here this Danish label drums up a less-than-fresh concept record of IDM artists presenting their take on hip-hop. But with the recent genius explosion of creative ingenuity in hip-hop—crunk, grime, ragga and their superproducer counterparts—what precisely makes a hip-hop record? With some exceptions (i.e.: Tilliander, Melk), most contributions sashay past this quagmire wearing nothing but their slickly processed Mo' Wax retreads. *Brian Paul*

**LOUIE VEGA: EXTENSIONS**

Vega/US/CD

Temporarily splitting from Masters at Work partner Kenny Dope for last year's *Elements of Life*, Louie Vega makes *Extensions* a family affair, inviting a host of DJs to remix his Latin-based house excursions. Joe Clausell lays down a bottom-end heavy "Sunshine" as vocalist Blaze croons about the lightness of love. Jazzy Jeff adds mid-tempo flair to "Jungle Fever," while Vega himself tinkers with five cuts. One includes Dope, who also lends a tasteful hand to "Cerca De Mi." DJ Spinna's pouncing rendition of "A Better Day" winds down the record before a conga- and steel drum-led "Steel Congo" puts it to bed. This collection could easily have been dubbed *More Elements of Life*, which doesn't make it a bad thing, just more of the same. *Derek Beres*

Verve/US/CD

Less uneven than the previous two volumes in the series, *VR3* hits several high notes, as Bent tackles Billie Holiday, Lyrics Born re-rubs the late Jimmy Smith, RJD2 manhandles Astrid Gilberto, and Max Sedgely updates Sarah Vaughan. Lots of breaks and beats galore, not to mention already-classic vocal performances. Yet for all the recontextualizing, hi-tech futurism, and contemporary cool posturing at work, *VR3* ultimately succeeds on the strengths of the original songs. No amount of bells and whistles can out-swing Anita O'Day's relentlessly cheery "Sing, Sing, Sing"—and few modern-day divas can match her phrasing. Luckily, the RSL remix doesn't downplay the song's retro qualities, but goes with the flow quite nicely. *Eric K. Arnold*

**VERVE REMIXED 3**



**MONIKA:FORCE**

Monika Enterprise/GER/CD

Collecting 19 tracks from 13 artists (not including remixers), *Monika:Force* shows the Monika Enterprise label's strength is not rooted in any concussive propulsion; rather, it confidently embraces that pop trope: the hook. Since 1997, Monika Enterprises has nurtured a roster of artists—including Barbara Morgenstern, Chica + The Folder, Figurine, Contriva, The Burka Band, and Cobra Killers—for whom cyclical melody supercedes momentum. There's also something subtle and caressing about each song here, something feminine in the chiming, folkish flourishes. Perhaps alluding to a generation of Germans rebuilding broken homes in patchwork cities through hybrid technology, this collection of rarities exudes a welcoming electroacoustic aura—computer music more for the hearth than the concert hall. *Tony Ware*



## TECHNO GUEST REVIEWS: THE GLIMMERS

Fearing a lawsuit from the *other* Glimmer Twins—Mick and Keith of The Rolling Stones—the Ghent, Belgium-based DJ duo of Mo and Benoëlie recently had to change their name to The Glimmers. But the pair is as sparkly as ever, having just released a *DJ-Kicks* compilation that is another (albeit big stone) in the cobbled path of their careers. Since they started DJing together at 16, the two have thrown numerous parties—the most famous of which, Eskimo, was in an abandoned underwear factory—plus they run the Eskimo record label and produce tracks under the name Dirty Minds. Add to that the fact that they're name is as synonymous with Belgium as waffles, and you'll see why we had to find out what they're playing now. *Vivian Host*  
www.glimmertwins.com

### KAOS FEEL LIKE I FEEL (SING A LONG) !K7/GER/12

From the long awaited album of Dennis Kaos, an amazing disco tune written and recorded by Dennis together with Daniel Wang. We are very much into this track, as it has a very dubby approach to disco and it even reminds us of Diana Ross! Big summer tune. *The Glimmers*

### LOTTERBOYS HEROIN white/GER/12

This is going to be huge! Think Tom Jones on acid! Guitars and funky rhythms clashing with the vocals of Paris The Black Fu (Detroit Grand Pubahs). Play it loud and play it again and again and again. Already one of the tunes of the year. We love it. *The Glimmers*

### THE SEXMACHINES OKAY (WHITEY RMX) white/BEL/12

A crazy guitar-driven track by Danny Mommens from Belgium's finest, Vive La Fête; this is an alternative version by Nathan (Whitey). It's strange but very radio-friendly with a big sound. Check it out—coming soon to your favorite record shop. *The Glimmers*

### AKIKO KIYAMA DIMENSION

Süd/UK/12

The debut EP from Akiko Kiyama, on Portable's Süd label, bears the traces of its influences like layers of sediment along a sheared-off hillside: the clunky kick drums of Ark, the digital death rattles of Sutekh, and even the bright melodic bursts of Luciano. But her four tracks, ranging from high-density funk to dissipative dub, have a distinctive bite that's all their own. *Philip Sherburne*

### APENDICS SHUFFLE SAW SAW SOUP

Orac/US/12

Orac's masterful single, Caro's "My Little Pony" made 'em shiver in bars and on the blogs alike, a feat Mr. Shuffle's hiccupping techhouse EP will likely repeat. The Seattle label tosses convention into the furnace on each new release—"Saw Saw Soup," for instance, bends four-four beats like pipecleaners, pasting them with glitchy static, cynical vocal bits, and fluffy low-end dynamics. It's anything but predictable, and stunningly fun dance music. *Derek Grey*

### CHRISTIAN LINDER & SMG FLAMES

Phono Elements/GER/12

Phono standby Christian Linder and newcomer SMG deliver two tracks of resonant, pumping techno for the Frankfurt label. "Flames" sparks off with glancing arpeggios and slowly builds into a well-stoked stormer, with flickering chords licking at dancers' heels. "Vintage," true to its name, marries a classic acid sequence to Kanzleramt-styled pings, making for a great complement to Donnacha Costello's Colour Series. *Philip Sherburne*

### DJ KOZE LATE CHECK OUT

Kompakt/GER/12

The epic is alive and well on Kompakt. Koze's "Let's Help Me" soars above a landscape checkered with techno's various crops, from desiccated click tracks to sour electro arpeggios, from resonant piano house chords to

delirious pop ambiance. The B-side features a springy canvas of Closer Musik-styled bounce and, for Stone Roses fans, a slab of back-masked psychedelia. *Philip Sherburne*

### SLACKNOISE VS. PLEXUS ANA TAK

Minus/CAN/12

While minimal structure can often leave room for desired texture, this Brooklyn meets Berlin team knows all the tricks to fill in the spaces. Hauntingly moody from measure one, this edgy yet climatic groove will still keep floors jumpin' at 5AM. The original contains the greatest dynamic range, however both remixes offer interesting twists of events. *Praxis*

### TOMAS ANDERSSON FESTIVITIES

BPitch Control/GER/12

This mish-mash of sound is appropriate for BPitch Control's 100<sup>th</sup> release; it defines the synth-happy, techno style on which the label has built its reputation. Multi-octave clicks and bleeps traverse a steady bassline thump on this bubbly yet saucy dancefloor track. The B-side hypes this style up even more and adds a vocal clip tweaked beyond comprehension, which seals things up perfectly. *Jenn Marston*

### ALEX SMOKE DON'T SEE THE POINT

Soma/SCOT/12

On his second outing for Glasgow's Soma, Smoke crafts a bit of his signature string-heavy late night funk. Side A dishes up a bit of monotonous vocal haze, whereas the flip embodies a broader motif. The triplet riff in the bass adds distinctive character, while a resonated sixteenth-note lead receives a modulated oscillator sync tweak, creating pitch phasing within the break. Rowdy. *Praxis*

### THE FORLORN CURSES UPON CURSES

Morris Audio /SWIT/12

Bryan Zentz issues another techno milestone. Featuring loopy drums, Zentz blends atmospheric strings, a portamento-swung melody, and

overdriven slapped bass with edgy electro-house nuances. "Curses" keeps a pure analog feel throughout the mix, giving a late '80s polish to contemporary club techno. *Praxis*

### DIGITAL MOTION TRANSITIONS

ADSR/UK/12

Distributed by Pure Plastic, and owing to that label/distro's Britain-does-Detroit-one-better ethos (see: Mark Broom), Chris Poacher and Owain K are Digital Motion, whose atmospheric, hi-hat scattered EP is tasteful techno made driving enough for underground warehouse sessions. Fast but not mental, colorful but not delicate, and regally soulful without losing its techno edge, "Transitions" is a cut above. *Tomas*

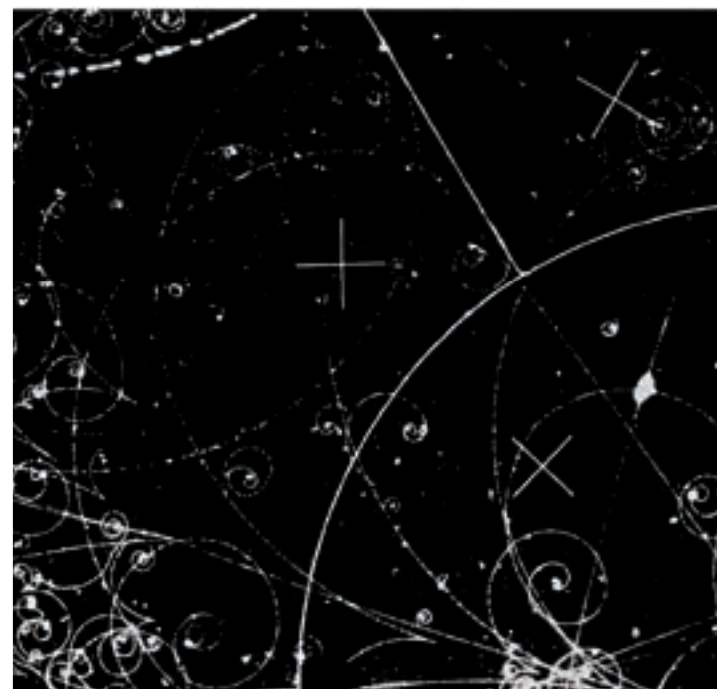
### E-TRONEEK FUNK & CHRIS CARRIER

HELP YOURSELF VOL. 2

Dialect/FRA/12

When its time to ratchet it up a notch, drop this acidic techno hybrid on your unsuspecting crowd. Although the squarewave bass dynamics of "Revelation 21" mesh perfectly with the current crop of electrohouse, it could lose the trite vocoded vox. "Ladies & Gentlemen" fares better, reveling in overdriven analog feedback and a *schaffel* drum pattern. Save your energy for "Its Time," an unadulterated fever dream that sounds like Josh Wink on half a sheet of bad LSD. *Derek Grey*

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## HOUSE GUEST REVIEWS: GREENSKEEPERS

In 2001, Greenskeepers—the then-duo of James Curd and Nick Maurer—kicked 4/4 fans in the ass with a new hybrid: swing house. Inspired by big band’s sounds, rhythms, and party spirit, these two skateboarders unleashed a series of 12”s on Farris Wheel, Classic, and G-Swing that put the humor back on the dancefloor; these were followed up in April 2003 with their first full-length, *The Ziggy Franklen Show* (Classic). With the recent release of *Pleetch* (OM), Greenskeepers adds two new members to the fold—producer Mark Share and instrumentalist Coban Rudish—but keeps the tongue-in-cheek attitude that keeps DJs coming back for more. Here, James Curd gives us a rundown on his house favorites. *Saffron Reeves*  
[www.greenskeepersmusic.com](http://www.greenskeepersmusic.com), [www.om-records.com](http://www.om-records.com)

### IZ AND DIZ MAGNIFICENT white/US/12

“Magnificent” is a classic Iz and Diz song. It’s full of dark, spacey keys and Diz doing his Bobby McFerrin impersonation that we all love. I think it’s a great song because I can play it at a party and I can put it on my “clean the house” playlist on the iPod. *JC*

### JDUB LOVE ON THE LINE Virgin/FRA/12

Jdub has been one of Chicago’s favorite hometown DJs for a long time. This is his first record and it’s a great way to start the production side of his career. Not only did he write this song, he also sang it. It has a great, deep bassline that you can feel throughout your whole body at the club. Mark Farina has been playing it non-stop and is working on a remix of it himself. *JC*

### EDMUND FUSION OF SOUNDS EP Grab/US/12

Edmund is a new producer from San Sebastian, Spain. This record makes me want to go visit San Sebastian the same way Ernest Hemingway’s *The Sun Also Rises* does. My favorite song on this EP is “Walking In My City;” it’s full of wet synths and a low bass that makes it a perfect warm-up song for the beginning of the party. *JC*

### BOOKA SHADE ALBUM REMIX EDITION 1 Get Physical/GER/12

Arguably the finest tune from Booka Shade’s recently released, debut long-player, “Cha” gets the remix treatment from two of dance music’s finest—and female—auteurs. Chloe stays true to the original electro funk vibe while Ada channels, er, Basic Channel, for a heady dub-infused excursion. Nevertheless, it’s Booka Shade’s own extended mix that comes up trumps this time ‘round. *Roy Dank*

### VULVA STRING QUARTETT DEATH CAB FOR BOOTSY Combination/GER/12

Title of the month goes to Germany’s Vulva String Quartett and their “Death Cab for Bootsy” EP, sounding as if Get Physical went minimal. “Wild, Wild Berry” is finely detailed minimal electrohouse, all shimmering tones and undersea basslines while “Arsenio Hall” gets a bit darkly flirtatious with layered, staccato melodies and a strong kick drum. Flip for the more dancefloor-friendly title track, further blurring the lines between house, techno, and electro. *Mike Battaglia*

### LINDSTROM ANOTHER SIDE OF LINDSTROM Outergaze/JPN/2x12

Norway’s Hans-Peter Lindstrom loves him some disco, and flaunts it proudly on this double pack. Like his disco-editing live-show partner Prins Thomas (Rong Recordings), this Norseman stretches his tracks out to eight funky minutes, and his added live drums, keyboard, and guitar riffs flow as fluidly as Brass Construction or KC & The Sunshine Band did in

the ‘70s. Ensuring flares and platforms another half-life, Lindstrom revels in modern-age retro boogie. *Hector Cedillo*

### SOLARIS HEIGHTS JUST BEGUN Freerange/UK/12

After a few choice twelves for labels like Paper and Guidance, Solaris Heights makes an appearance on Jamie “Jimpster” Odell’s Freerange label for a well-produced slice of deep and jazzy peak-time vocal house. A competent vocal makes the original worth checking out, as well as the glitchy almost-electro-house dub version. Odell himself completes the record with a Jimpster remix, improving on the original by keeping things funky and streamlined. *Mike Battaglia*

### PATCHWORKS PRESENTS MR DAY DEEP OCEAN Still/US/12

Still’s third release (and the second by Paris’s Patchworks) delves into the type of jazz-house fellow Frenchie St. Germain made safe for latte-sippers. That’s not to say this single, which features a synth and percussion-laden Ron Trent mix and brushed-snare original, is background muzak. With a Nina Simone-style vocal refrain, fingersnaps, and hollow-body jazz guitar riffs, it conjures a back-alley Left Bank bistro at 3AM, empty bottles of sauvignon littering the floor. Intoxicating. *Tomas*



## 2-STEP/BREAKS GUEST REVIEWS: BANGERS & MASH

Bangers and Mash is the name of a New York City supercrew, comprised of Warp Records/Sound-Ink duo Team Shadetek (Zack and Matt) and breakcore terrorist Drop The Lime, who has thrown down for Tigerbeat 6 and Brooklyn Beats. Bangers and Mash is also the name of their monthly party at Rothko (116 Suffolk Street) in the Lower East Side. A self-proclaimed “urban rave jumpoff,” the trio plays mainly the newest in UK sublow sounds, but also throws down reggaeton, ghetto-tech, and whatever other bass mayhem they come across. Recent guests at the party have included the likes of DJ/Rupture, Airborn Audio, Knifehandchop, and East London grime stalwarts Jammer, Ears, and D Double E. We asked the three about their hyphiest tracks of the moment. *Star Eyes*  
[www.werechangeagent.com/shadetek](http://www.werechangeagent.com/shadetek), [www.dropthelime.com](http://www.dropthelime.com)

### STORMIN FEAT. NASTY JACK FAKES Nasty/UK/12

“Fakes” sets it off with a hilarious intro: “The other day one girl come up to me and ask ‘How come Nasty don’t make no love songs?’ So we gonna make something nice and *real mellow*. Naw. Cut the music.” This then drops into a roughneck double-time square wave riddim with Stormin riding rapidly. The flip, “9 Minute Slew,” disses Bruza over a strong half-time, Eski-style riddim. *Zack Shadetek*

### JAMMER FEEDBACK Jah Mek The World/UK/12

This track is how fights get started. “Feedback” is a boneyard, a death tone feebly held together by the skeletal remains of a beat. The turntables have been possessed and are annihilating the dancefloor with a relentless one-note bass while rave synths stab your ears. Definitely not for the champagne sipping 2-steppers—this is end-of-the-world murder music. *Matt Shadetek*

### ACTIV MAINTENANCE EP Maintenance/UK/12

Activ pulls in the listener with suspense until the basslines kick—once they do, they’re trashcan timpanies pitched down six octaves. Every tune here is incredibly sinister, but with cartoony riffs and vocal snips. “Klik Burst” has a melody that jumps around like playground tag, and “Manoeuver” has a kung-fu-meets-James-Brown “Ha!” Loaded with gunshots, cock-backs, and a neo-noir take on grime, this is a definite crowd-shaker. *DTL*

### CRAZY T FEAT. KEISHA & ALIAS GULLY Middle Row/UK/12

A sweet chorus from The Sugababes’ Keisha holds down this R&B-flavored grime ting from man-of-the-moment Alias. Dark strings and propulsive monster bass provide a backdrop for bashy lyrics from the maniacal Crazy Titch. This lays bare the argument that grime is England’s crunk—it is, now get “Gully!” *Star Eyes*

### WIDEBOYS FEAT. ERROL REID I THINK U LIKE IT Garage Jams/UK/12

If you’re itching to get your Todd (Edwards) on, the Wideboys come with four slabs of classic 1998 style. Errol Reid’s vocals are UK soul *lite*, but they get put through their paces with plenty of skipping, swung-out snares and catchy, bubbly synth melodies. The Fool 4 x 4 mix is the winner here, but there’s also speed garage and chugging Funki versions. *Star Eyes*

### ED CASE BLAZIN’ white/UK/12

Originally released on Killer Instinct, Ed Case’s “Blazin’” gets a new fire lit under it with the smoking vocals from Kinane getting the new-school garage re-rub. One Dark Martian works his vocal science on the 4x4 tip and Dezz Jones drops a stepper that harkens back to garage’s heyday. Guaranteed to burn down the disco. *DeepSix*

### AGENT X FEAT. VULA GIRLS CAN PLAY TOO Heatseeker/UK/12

A current favorite from Canada to Korea, Heatseeker comes with another dope injection. Take Vula, one of the scene’s most “now” voices, add in the always dancefloor savvy Agent X on the original production, and hand the results off to Riplash and Sus for the remix treatment—speaker cones about to get blown! *DeepSix*

### MISTY DUBS EXPECTATIONS DR. VENOM FEAT. CARLY BOND NOT WISE True Tiger/UK/12

True Tiger is a label on the rise. After dropping the heavy “Watford Weather” late last year, they have put out nothing but quality tunes. The latest editions give us four tracks of 4x4 flavor from Misty Dubs with the Valerie M collaboration “The Pain You Caused” standing heads above. And the anti-violence anthem “Not Wise” from Dr. Venom and Carly Bond (remixed by Scandalous Unltd.) finally sees a proper release. Big tunes. *DeepSix*

### BOSSMAN BONGO EYES II Bossman/UK/12

Davinche’s “Eyes on U” has been pounded hard by all the big MCs and, like any other great riddim, it’s been re-versed repeatedly. This time D’s Essentials Crew cohort Bossman turns in “Bongo Eyes II,” which interminably stops and pulls back the original’s rigid kick and ping for a woozy, wobbly grind that’s thick as syrup. *Cooper*

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## DRUM & BASS GUEST REVIEWS: FABIO

Fabio originally played soul and funk when he first hooked up with hip-hop DJ Grooverider in 1987. The pair progressed through playing acid house and techno before pioneering the UK breakbeat sound that eventually evolved into drum & bass; but through it all, Fabio never lost touch with his roots. Everything he's done—from his BBC Radio 1 show (Saturday morning, 1am-3am) to his Creative Source record label to his wicked London club night Swerve—has pushed the more melodic and soulful end of drum & bass, even when it wasn't in fashion to do so. Fabio's one of the premiere tastemakers in drum & bass scene, having championed such artists as Calibre, High Contrast, Danny C, and Commix. He's no slouch on the decks either; check his *Fabric Live 10* mix for proof. This drum & bass legend found time to update us on his favorite new tracks. *Star Eyes* [www.bbc.co.uk/radio1/urban/fabandgroove](http://www.bbc.co.uk/radio1/urban/fabandgroove)

### DKAY & KASRA BABYLON Critical/UK/12

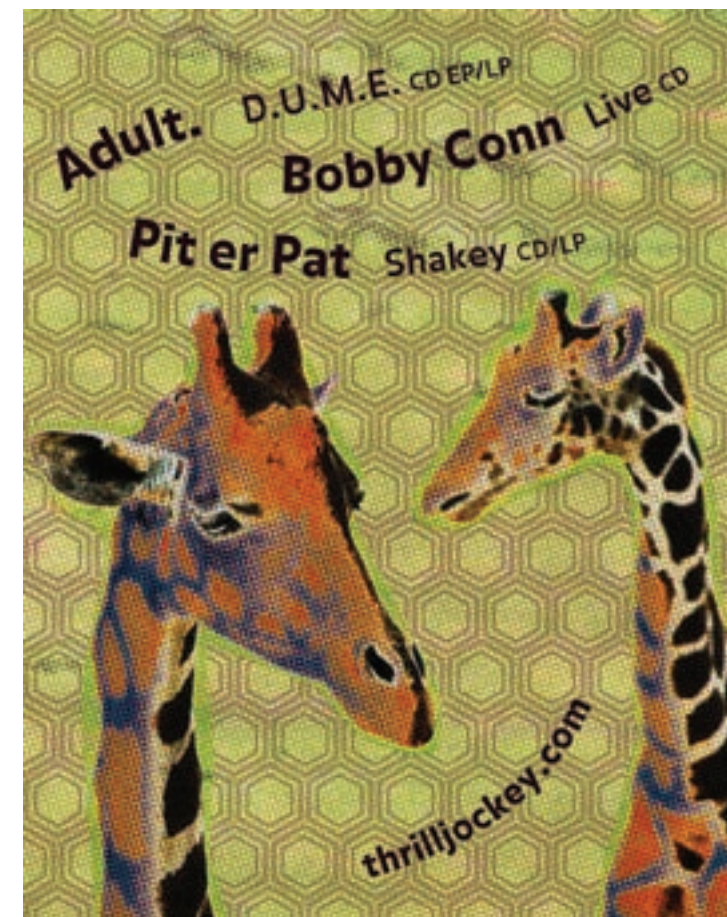
Can't admit to being a fan of all dubby style d&b—it can sometimes sound like d&b-by-the-numbers. When it works, as this track does, the result is a wonderful, masterful production that maintains a dancefloor feel. Big, boomin' bass and a Nina Simone-style vocal make this an essential tune. *Fabio*

### CALIBRE SECOND SUN Signature/UK/12

The sublime Mr. Calibre changes his sound once again. Straying away from the often-copied roots style, this is an orchestral epic. A big string break, soulful bassline, and a Nu:Tone/High Contrast-style feel makes this a big departure in sound for Calibre. Bliss. *Fabio*

### DRUMSOUND & BASSLINE SMITH NEWSFLASH white/UK/12

After a huge success with the groundbreaking "Odyssey," a year later comes another big moment for the camp. Here, Drumsound & Bassline Smith mimic the P-Funk-influenced Dr. Dre and Timbaland style, paying homage to the hip-hop sound. This wouldn't sound out of place in a Tony Touch set. Big tune! *Fabio*



### ECHO FALLING

Violence/US/12  
Anyone who remembers SF's era of dark drum & bass will recognize the name Echo, and on "Falling" he evokes the depths of a twisted mind with an evil sickness that only DJs who play as tormented as Dylan and Grooverider could handle. Paradoxically, Calyx delivers one of his most accessible songs to date with "Out Of Time," full of filtered acid sounds, a Tears For Fears sample, and aggressive breaks that never stagnate in the hands of this d&b Ginsu. *Star Eyes*

### AJC WHAT U LIKE PHOBIA LOOK FOR ME

Renegade/UK/12  
It's a vacation on vinyl with these two newbies from Renegade. AJC goes for silky R&B vibes, crispy rolling breaks, and minor key synths on the calming "What U Like" and "Sticks and Stones." Phobia kicks it up for the dancefloor with deft use of the "Drop Bear" break on "Understand" (with Enjay) and wicked interesting combinations of dubby bass, hollow synths, and vocal moans on the stellar "Look For Me." *Star Eyes*

### SHOLTO THE SLEEPER (SILENT WITNESS & BREAK REMIX)

Pollen/UK/12  
Silent Witness & Break, who are quickly emerging as the next Ed Rush & Optical, have taken up remix duties on the slick downtempo number "The Sleeper." The duo keeps all of the original jazz sensibilities and blends them with their dingy and emotive nu-tech sound. A somber yet delightful tune. *Ryan Romana*

### AMIT SECOND CUT

Bingo Beats/UK/12  
One of d&b's modern talents, Amit has a diverse appeal, winning favor with Metalheadz, Commercial Suicide, and now DJ Zinc's versatile Bingo label. "Second Cut" has been a firm favorite for the connoisseurs for some time, a heavy sub and half-stepping beats make it both a listeners delight and a dancefloor smash. *4Real*

### ALIAS CAN I

Critical/UK/12  
Alias, the wicked combination of DJ Flight's breezy style accented with Breakage's drum choppage, tosses out another pair of dreamy rollers for Critical that doesn't disappoint. "Can I" shapes bass bubbles around sliced Apache rhythms and weightless waves of vocals, while "Van Cleef" springs forward with snappy breaks, horn stabs, and muddled samples that creep. *Ryan Romana*

### SUBFOCUS X RAY

Ram/UK/12  
A new recipe with the classic Ram sound, "Scarecrow" is a slick roller with a funky and slight switching theme. Unique, but easily playable, this easily compliments tracks from all of d&b's sub-genres. "X-Ray" is simply an anthem—destined to become one of the biggest tracks of '05. *4Real*

### ICR/MAV & TWISTER CHANGE INSIDE (ASC REMIX)

Offshore/US/12  
ASC gets called back to remix "Change Inside" and tears it inside out with frantic drum patterns, drop-heavy bass, and an overall apocalyptic atmosphere that will have heads spinning and arms flailing. Contrasting nicely is b-side, Mav & Twister's "The Tubes," with condescending "Warhead"-like bass hits and techy overtones creating spatial harmony. *Ryan Romana*

### JOHN B & EXILE BROKEN LANGUAGE

Planet Mu/UK/12  
A Rotterdam hardcore-style bassline plugs away beneath over-timestretched drums, and freaked-out processing is applied on every single sound. The intro mixes cleanly with current d&b, while the rest of the arrangement takes license with Pendulum's switching style and Dillinja's second drop bass progressions. With the craziest edits short of AFX, this is d&b in the blender. *4Real*

### CALIBRE HYPNOTIZE

Soul:R/UK/12  
Calibre returns to Soul:R with a sublime soul masterpiece. A minimal piano melody grooves along with male humming, female breaths, and faint disco strings. "The Water Carrier," on side B, brings in a faster break and rougher bassline with a Detroit feel. *4Real*

### BREAKAGE STAGGERED

Critical/UK/12  
For a steady diet of Amens, "Staggered Dub" is your best bet. Fusing the famous break with dub chants that are truly evocative of a jungle, Breakage turns very few musical elements into a compelling, energetic composition. The same is true of the flip side, "For Me," which includes tribal drums and some nicely positioned Rhodes chords in the musical layout. *Jenn Marston*

### HIVE KRUSH

Metalheadz/UK/12  
Taking the best ideas from every Metalheadz song, "Krush" nonetheless remains distinctly Hive's. "Against the Grain" is a thought-provoking organ workout reminiscent of Hidden Agenda, with a unique break that can't be compared to anything. *4Real*



<p><b>BLAKKAT FEAT. TYRA OTHER WOMAN SHABOOM</b></p>	<p><b>UNTITLED ORCHESTRA THE VINTAGE EP ICON</b></p>	<p><b>CARLTON BANKS STORY TIME WITH CARLTON BANKS COCO MACHETE</b></p>	<p><b>PHILLIP ENNO BREAK OUT THE PADDLE SELECT</b></p>	<p><b>PETE DAFEET 1000 ROCKS EP BOSH</b></p>	<p><b>VARIOUS INNER CITY EXPERIENCE VOL 3 DEEPFUNK</b></p>	<p><b>JUKE JOINT FEAT. DRINA CONSUME ME CASA DEL SOUL</b></p>	<p><b>THOMAS BLONDET AKA DJ TOM B FEAT APPLE ROCHEZ INTO ME ODDS &amp; ENDS</b></p>	<p><b>GUIDED METHODS DIGITAL THERAPY EP GREENHOUSE</b></p>
<p><b>B-TEAM AIN'T IT FUNKY ODDS &amp; ENDS</b></p>	<p><b>JOVONN BLACQUE HOUZE SAMPLESTRUMENTAL NEXT MOOV TRAXX</b></p>	<p><b>PAL JOEY MOTHER'S DAY/FATHER'S DAY LOOP D' LOOP</b></p>	<p><b>TUSSE DISCO D' ORO MUNK RMX RONG</b></p>	<p><b>JUNIA OVADOSE HUBBA HUBBA VOL 2 GREENHOUSE</b></p>	<p><b>JOVONN FEAT. CAROLYN HARDING HE'S MORE NEXT MOOV</b></p>	<p><b>THOMAS SAAS AKA PUBLIC ACCESS THE RED SCARE GRAB</b></p>	<p><b>ECBM &amp; DJ HEATHER PICTURE OF YOU PT 1 (HODGES/NATURAL RHYTHM) BLACKCHERRY</b></p>	<p><b>THE DRUNK PART 2 RONG PROMO ONLY</b></p>

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## HIP-HOP GUEST REVIEWS: SAKE-ONE

A glance at the recent Top 10 of veteran DJ Sake-One typifies the Bay Area's open-ended outlook on hip-hop. The cat is playing soul by the likes of Omar and Amerie, new flavors from Platinum Pied and Mark De Clive-Lowe, dancehall and reggae, plus underground hip-hop joints from local cats like Zion-I and Living Legends. Holding it down as one of the many arms of the octopus-like (((Local 1200))) DJ crew, it is impossible to pick up a hip-hop flyer without Sake's name on it. And should you not have picked up any of his popular *Soul Deluxe* mixtape series, fear not. He's here to tell you what's hot on the corner of Haight and Fillmore. *Saffron Reeves* [www.djsake1.com](http://www.djsake1.com)

### DJ GRINCH SOLIDO VOL. 1 EP

Escapism/JPN/12  
Out on one of Japan's more promising new imprints, SF-to-Tokyo transplant DJ Grinch reworks two Latin jazz classics, the Dee Felice Trio's "Nightingale" and Cal Tjader's "Cubano Chant" (recently heard on De La Soul's unwatched-for "Watch Out"). Both songs get a more straight-up hip-hop feel, with "Nightingale" getting an additional house remix on the flip. This record is my friend. *Sake-One*

### GOAPELE FIRST LOVE

SkyBlaze/US/12  
Oakland's flyest touches back down on Earth to claim her throne as the modern voice of protest soul with the "Change it All" project. Along the way, though, she drops this nostalgic love bomb so we got a choice: the ballad or the bullet. Heavenly. *Sake-One*

### JOHN LEGEND USE 2 LOVE U (YAMWHO? RMX)

white/UK/CD-R  
This song was my sh\*t in 2004. I put it on my *Soul Deluxe Vol. 3* mix CD, and then I kinda got tired of it. Then YamWho? takes the record on a trip to Bahia and I'm in love again! Ah, music. *Sake-One*

### SCAVONE REVOLUTION NOW

Deaf In The Family/US/12  
Gruff-voiced underground vet Scavone (formerly Don Scavone) dropped his mob title, but hasn't lost a step on the mic. On "Revolution Now," he speaks on the ills of the world and the music industry over a smooth uptempo beat (don't let the opening rock guitar fool you). He even tries his hand at singing on the hook, and while it's not his strong suit, he could've done worse. The flip, "Back In The Day," finds him reminiscing about hip-hop's simpler days over a soulful loop. *Ross Hogg*

### TIME MACHINE GRIME MACHINE

Glow In The Dark/US/12  
After building a strong rep through choice singles and an excellent debut LP, Time Machine returns with this triple threat EP. "Mind In A Spin" teams them with Roxbury rhyme vet Edo G, while "Caught On Tape" investigates our video-obsessed society. But it's the third track, "Matter Transporter," that really impresses, built on ear-tickling chimes and punchy drums laced by Stoerok. *Brolin Winning*

### MASTA ACE DA GRIND

M3/US/12  
If you're still sleeping on Masta Ace's last album *A Long Hot Summer*, this second single should wake your lazy ass up. "Da Grind" (featuring Apocalypse) is on the smooth, contemplative tip, oozing silky strings and mid-tempo beats, while QB representative Big Noyd brings the gulliness on the bullet-riddled street banger "Do It Man." Two great songs from the Masta and friends. *Brolin Winning*



## FUTURE JAZZ GUEST REVIEWS: CARLOS NIÑO

Los Angeles fixture Carlos Niño is an Aquarius—a perfect sign for someone whose music often harkens back to the Age of Aquarius. His production work for the likes of soul-jazz singer Dwight Trible, percussion-happy Hu Vibrational, the John Coltrane-hewed Build An Ark, and hip-hop minimalist Fabian Ammon Alston (as Ammoncontact) draws from dub, '60s psychedelia and Sun Ra, throwing in rare groove and hip-hop influences. Niño also DJs on Dublab.com and KPFK 90.7FM (check his Spaceways show), and is a co-founder of the fabulously freethinking Temple Bar club. Check his work on Ammoncontact's upcoming *New Birth* and Trible's *Love Is the Answer*, and peep his favorite jams. *Vivian Host* [www.todosonidaspresenta.org](http://www.todosonidaspresenta.org)

### DAEDELUS JUST BRIEFLY

Ninja Tune/UK/12  
Daedelus does more with sampling, programming, and playing than anyone. I use the word genius sparingly, but when you listen to this song you'll understand why I use it when describing him. "Just Briefly" is Andre 3000's "Hey Ya" with its uptempo rock backbeat and "Alfomega" by Caetano Veloso with its driving bassline, strings, and experimental funk feel. A classic in my mind! *CN*

### EDAN, PERCEE P, & CUT CHEMIST TORTURE CHAMBER

Lewis/UK/12  
Cut Chemist's remix of "Torture Chamber" is a fast, break-heavy gem that sounds like it was rescued from a 1990 time capsule. Lyrical legend Percee P leads it off over an incredible drum-and-feedback edit of an extremely obscure early '70s Italian RCA Library recording, while celebrated Boston MC/DJ/producer Edan takes this spitfire track to the next level. *CN*

### SA-RA CREATIVE PARTNERS COSMIC DUST EP

Jazzy Sport/JPN/12  
"Space Slop" is one of my favorite SA-RA joints with its loose jazz jam feel and wide array of sonic sources. "Jumbo" is a classic future funk-hip-hop instrumental that all non-SA-RA-believers will have to give it up for. "Wa" is for the late night when you and your lover get freaky. The hype on SA-RA is backed up by incredible music. *CN*

### MIDDLEFIELD INCOMING

Diaspora/UK/12  
Toronto-based Middlefield's catchy blend of jazzy, atmospheric house influences makes this EP a cut above. T-dot's other favorite son, Moonstarr, turns "Incoming" into a Latin-tinged broken epic on one of his finest remixes. Just don't let it overshadow this EP's overall strength; Middlefield is poised to make his mark. *Velanche*

### UNFORSCENE FEAT. ALICE RUSSELL

DON'T YOU WORRY (DOMU MIXES)  
Wah Wah/UK/12  
Dominic Stanton tears through another confoundingly good remix, this time taking Unforscene's smoky downbeat original and crafting a jagged dancefloor anthem. All his usual elements are in place: blinding funkiness, complex melodics, and an exquisite balance between buzzing synths, jazzy Rhodes, and Russell's throaty vocals. Instant head nod action. *Mike Battaglia*

### BREAK REFORM AND I

Abstract Blue/UK/12  
Forget yr Norah Jones, or any other cooing vocalist—Break Reform's Nanar re-envisions smooth British soul with confident, intelligent songs matched by equally challenging, yet sensible, music. Add a downbeat Yam Who? rub and Sidewinder's swinging retouch and you're hearing the likely heir to Soul2Soul's legacy. *Tomas*

### BABY BLAK JUST BEGUN

Sound Ink/US/12  
Philly rhyme fanatic Baby Blak more than holds his own in this tale of holding his head, and he does so over three very different mixes. King Honey's Early Mix is militant and accented with staccato stabs, while his LateMix evokes rap's earlier electro era and lets Blak's rhymes float over the track without losing any of their weight. The Scratchmix version takes it underground, quite literally; the blips and distortion make it sound as if there's pound of dirt lodged in the sampler. *Ross Hogg*

### LEKAN BABALOLA

ASOKERE (ICON OF THE CROSSROADS)  
51 Lex/UK/12  
Upstart imprint 51 Lex drops the second 12-inch from Mr. Babalola, rocking mightily on an Afrocentric tip with mad percussion and an upbeat vocal chorus readymade for Carnivale. I. G. Culture steps in on remix duties for his usual off-kilter broken ting, utilizing choice bits of the original's melody and vocal to build a heads-down groover in inimitable style. The B-side's 4/4 mix is perfect for your Trents and Claussells. *Mike Battaglia*

### SOLAR APPLE QUARKETTE

DO YOU LOVE ME?  
RICHARD E SOMETIMES I  
Further Out/UK/12  
"Do You Love Me Too" is head-nodding bossa with moody vibes, and remixes galore from Break Reform, Unforscene, and Cordovan. Label founder (and half of the Quarkette) Richard E's "Sometimes I" intrigues and teases with a combo of modern and classic jazz, while "Hear Her Call" downs the tempo and slyly tips a familiar Philly chanteuse. Fresh. *Velanche*

### DWH BEAUTY

Counterpoint/UK/12  
On the Sheffield-based trio's second EP for Counterpoint, Zagreb's Eddy & Yannah skillfully rework "Beauty" into a Latin-tinged dancefloor filler. Blackbeard goes into dirty slow jam mode on "Darkside" with blistering results. The original "Beauty" and "Latter Rains," along with remixes, showcase Genifa Vernon-Edwards's elegant vocals, which make a strong first impression. *Velanche*



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## REGGAE REWIND BY ROSS HOGG

Welcome to Reggae Rewind, a new column covering the goings on in the world of reggae and dancehall. Between the time of writing and the time this issue hits the streets, upwards of 300 new singles will have dropped, so rather than give you an exhaustive overview of everything (file under "impossible"), I'll give you a few of my favorite releases—from dub and roots to tunes that bust the dance—as well as news, trends, and everyone's favorite—rumors.

I always check for classic crooners like **Freddie McGregor**, especially when he puts out beautiful songs like "Lock It Down" (7", Jah Ruby) over the classic Studio One riddim, Carlton & The Shoes' "Love Me Forever." On it, McGregor sings, "A niceness we want in dis ya time." With over a thousand murders a year in a nation with a population of only 2.5 million, it seems niceness is something that all of Jamaica could use.

In one bloody week in January, the country saw the death of two stars. **Gerald "Bogle" Levy**, creator of countless dances (like Bogle Dance and Butterfly), was slain by two gunmen on a motorcycle in Kingston after leaving the popular Weddy Weddy Wednesday party at Stone Love headquarters. Budding dancer **Kevin Reid** was also killed in the attack. **Benie Man** has offered a reward of \$1,000,000 JA for information leading to the arrest of his killers. One week later, rising star **Daddigon** was gunned down in Kingston. The husky-voiced singer founded the group Dutty Cup and was a member of Ghetto Youths Crew alongside **Damien "Jr. Gong" Marley**. Dutty Cup's most famous member, **Sean Paul**, is reportedly beside himself with grief; he is also rumored to be paying for Daddigon's funeral.

In light of this murderous trend, there couldn't be a better time

for a resurgence of roots and culture. Classic singer **Winston "Mr Fix It" Francis** comes back on the scene with his new maxi-CD single "I Shoulda Listened (Mama Woi)" (Definite) over a re-lick of Bob Marley's "Them Belly Full" (bonus: it's backed with a steppers remix by **Mafia & Fluxy**). **Mahlon Stewart** throws his hat into the ring with his "Dem Girls" 12" remix EP (Redbud). The sweet-voiced Stewart (son of **Roman** and nephew of **Tinga**) sounds right at home over the Emo Remix, a lively bouncing tune with a nice balance of old and new (like many of Redbud's releases).

The conscious army marches forward on the horn-filled **Lion Paw** riddim (7"/LP, VP), where **Morgan Heritage** "Hail Rastafari," **Richie Spice** warns that "It's Gonna Be More Terrible," and **Nadine Sutherland** implores the wicked to "Stop Your Bad Mind." Even **Vybz Kartel** gets "up to di time" and teams up with **Jah Cure** on "So Free" (7", Vertex)—a change of heart for Vybz, who gained a rep as dancehall's slackest star.

But Kartel has not completely forsaken his dutty ways. Teetimus and Jam2's new **Cookie Monster** riddim (LP, VP) finds Vybz singing a love song to his gun on "Buss It." The downtempo stutter-step riddim also features Lady Saw ("Best Pum Pum") and, as if to prove that there's room for everything, an actual conscious tune from Sizzla and Wayne Marshall ("Live Up").

But the riddim to watch is **Rah Rah** (7"/LP, VP) from Bobby Konders, producer of last year's massive Wanted riddim (**T.O.K.**'s "Gal Yuh Ah Lead"). **Elephant Man** makes it hype on the title cut, but I'm a sucker for OGs **King Kong** ("Dis Herb Ya") and **Burro Banton** ("Ya Dun No") who prove that riddims may change, but a great voice never goes out of style.



Winston "Mr Fix It" Francis (Martin Gomez)



Daddigon



## POP ON TRIAL BY SARA & MARIA

Contrary to what Shriekback opined some 20-odd years ago, the backbeat is our spine, not the bassline; it is a loose guide to keep bodies in motion. "Pop On Trial" is a new column alternately written by me, Maria, and my partner in crime, L'Trimm fan and wig collector Sara Sherr. We'll help you discern between the ever-increasing piles of post-punk, dancepunk, indietronica or whatever terms mass media chooses to foist upon a band that chooses to simultaneously rock and roll, whether they do it by live instrument, laptop or synthesizer.

Even though they may have changed their name from El Guapo to **Supersystem**, the Washington D.C. band's wrecking ball approach to crafting equal parts of chaotic and danceable punk rock remains unmistakable. (The name change occurred when the band switched from Dischord to Touch & Go Records and discovered a Chicago band had the name trademarked). On "Born Into the World," the single off its forthcoming debut for Touch & Go, the band takes another twist merging early freestyle with Middle Eastern flourishes—the song sounds as perfectly normal next to Shannon's "Let The Music Play" as it would beside the Bad Brains.

If you are into the whole drag/genderfuck performance thing, which we are because it's a whole lot more fun to watch than some dude staring at a laptop, be sure to catch Supersystem's Justin Moyer's side project **Edie Sedgwick**, where he struts about in high heels and rants to a backing band consisting of an iPod! *Her love is real... but she is not* is out now on DeSoto Records.

Back for another release, this time on Chicago's Thrill Jockey records, Detroit electronic duo **Adult.** fuses Poly Styrene's shrieks over Cabaret Voltaire's harsh electronics on their new EP. **D.U.M.E** sounds not unlike a garage band from their hometown discovering Kraftwerk's incessant pulsations for the first time, then turning to their four-track equipment and going ape-shit in the process.

Referencing the twee history of **Múm** founding members Gyda (who has since left the band to focus on her studies) and Kristín Anna Valtýsdóttir (both were on the cover of a Belle & Sebastian release) seems taboo but listening to the band's new EP **Dusk Log**, it's apparent Múm owes just as much of its preciousness to the entire roster of **Sarah Records** as it does to **The Raincoats'** *Odyshape* and fellow Icelandic Björk's mid-period records. Three

previously unreleased tracks receive the band's usual aesthetic treatment including "Kostrzyn," a sprawling and symphonic mini-epic that was a live favorite on tour; still, it only makes a mark when the music reaches barely audible levels on a home stereo.

Mum's the word for the Olsen twins' favorite band, **Postal Service**, who has been noticeably quiet since the release of their vaunted debut on Sub Pop, *Give Up*. Offering little in terms of an explanation (though I bet the recent signing of member Ben Gibbard's other band, **Death Cab For Cutie**, to **Atlantic Records** might be keeping his hands tied up), the teeming indie masses are expected to have their thirst quenched by the 12" release of "We Will Become Silhouettes," one of the album's weaker mid-section tracks. This paean to life in a post-nuclear holocaust world gets the repackaged treatment here, remade and remodeled by **Styrofoam** and **Matthew Dear** in the form of bonus remixes. Even when we're given a drop of fresh water ("Be Still My Heart"), it fails to satiate; it wouldn't come as a shock if their fans sought out more refreshing springs in the vastly growing landscape of indietronica. *Maria Tessa Sciarrino*



Adult.

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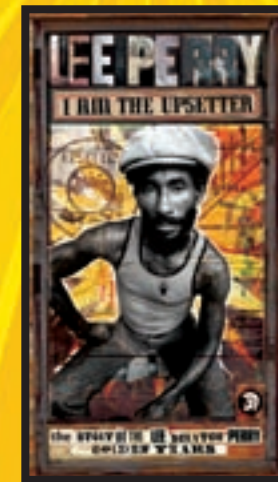
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**LUCKY 13**  
BY TOPH ONE

There comes a time in every good wino's life—it could be leaving San Carlos on the evening Caltrain or wandering the downtown hills of Omaha looking for a suitable bar to squander a few hours—when you realize that maybe you're not going to be the next Jonas Salk, or Hunter S. Thompson, or Afrika Bambaataa, and that this is it—get used to it, bub. Well, hell—we can't all get paid to travel the globe spinning records for 40,000 people a night, but maybe in our own little way we can do something well and make a few people happy somehow. Or at least not kill anyone.

As the energy and creativity of my youth slowly wanes into oblivion, I'm forced to confront the grim possibility that I may not reinvent the letterform, or write this generation's *On the Road*, but that doesn't mean you won't find me photo-copying little rants to hand to friends in bars or hunkered down in the back of the bus, scribbling mad, drunken wildstyle tags. This column, then, is dedicated to those secret beatbreaks out there doing their thing, even if only three people and a couple dogs ever hear it. Here's to obscurity.

Aw fuck it—let's blow the hell up and run shit, kids!

**1) LIZZ FIELDS BY DAY BY NIGHT (ABB/US/2xLP)** It must have been a year ago that my man Chris Haycock was telling me about this amazing demo a gal passed to him at a party in LA, and here now is the finished product from the most incredible voice I've heard on wax since Peven Everett. Another ABB coup!

**2) ONE.BE.LO "DECEPTICONS (PETE ROCK REMIX)" (FatBeats/US/12)** One.Be.Low, a.k.a. Onemanarmy from Binary Star, comes correct with a buttery smooth Pete Rock beat, bringing it back to the '93 era. So necessary!

**3) LIFESAVAS "FA SHO (REMIX)" (Quannum/US/12)** Banging new single from PDX's finest—ready to rock any party. Be on the lookout for a new album in the fall.

**4) PREFUSE 73 FEAT. GHOSTFACE & EL-P "HIDEYAFACE" (Warp/UK/12)** Ooooh, brother—this is the kinda stuff that makes the little hairs on the back of my neck stand up and take notice: weird, grungy, fearless music that confounds the crap rappers, and fans of crap rappers.

**5) HEZEKIAH HURRY UP & WAIT (Soulspazm/US/LP)** Another Philly renaissance man: this is the cat behind the Beat Society club night and you can also hear his music in the Showtime series *Street Time*. Here, Hezekiah shines on center stage as MC, songwriter, and behind the production boards. And shine brightly for sure—this is one to watch.

**6) DJ SPOOKY/TWILIGHT CIRCUS/ALTER ECHO "DUB SUMMIT" (M Records/US/12EP)** A range of sounds to please any palette—from hip-hop to traddy to Seriously Out There, this can get played almost any night of my week.



Baby Jaymes

**7) LIVING LEGENDS "BLAST YOUR RADIO" (Up Above/US/12)** These cats are so talented individually, and when they come together as a crew, it's just like listening to a little cup of good. Actually, a big mug of perfection. Props, always.

**8) MAHLON STEWART FEAT. ZEGE SUN "DEM GIRLS (APEANAUT REMIX)" (Redbud/US/12)** Wicked good electro-soul from those Apeanaut boys, hiding somewhere deep in Brooklyn.

**9) BABY JAYMES FEAT. KEAK DA SNEAK "TRICKS" (GhettoRetro-HardKnock/US/12)** What the hell? This is like Foster Silvers dumped in a trunk with Timbaland and Domu and driven up and down East Oakland streets looking for a sideshow on a Saturday night. *I love this!*

**10) DEXTAH "ANOTHER DAY AT THE JOB" (Untek/US/7)** Sweet little platter of breaks and loops from this trio of San Jose-based producers and diggers. On the flip is Age's "Borrowed." For fans of E.Da Boss, Kool DJ Rize, and the like.



Lizz Fields

**11) CONRAD NEWHOLMES EP (Snakebird/US/12)** I don't know if Jeff Chang covered Mennonite hip-hop producers in rural Illinois in his massive and authoritative tome *Can't Stop, Won't Stop*, but maybe he'll get a few words on the subject in the next edition. This is eclectic, eccentric music from the visionary dirt farmer also known as Smaze1.

**12) ROCK HUDSON "EL ELELA" (demo/CHL/CD)** Fun, funky music from Chile, by way of Italy where two of the members now live. Sort of on a Jestofunk/Up, Bustle & Out vibe, and that ain't too shabby!

**LUCKY 13) SHORTEE'S DJ 202 (Eyekiss Films/US/DVD)** Now, I'm way too old a dog to teach any new trick, but this instructional video for the intermediate DJ is a joy to watch, and packed with so much footage and information that it may be illegal in some states.

TophOne's mix CD *Live Loud & Dirty* is available at [www.fabric8.com/redwine](http://www.fabric8.com/redwine).

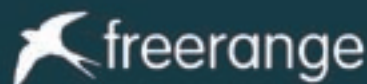
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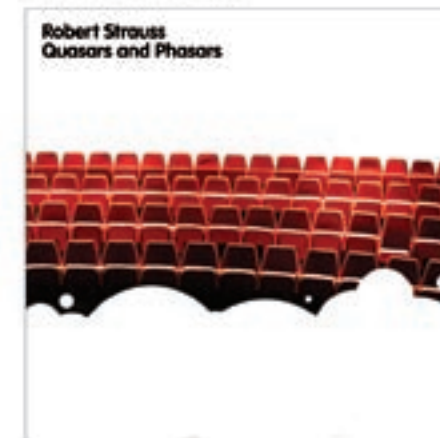
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## IN THE STUDIO PREFUSE 73

THE MAN OF MANY MONIKERS, SCOTT HERREN, DISCUSSES MPC MASTERY AND GETTING CRUNK.

WORDS: JESSE TERRY PHOTO: CHRISTOPHER WOODCOCK

Both 2001's *Vocal Studies and Uprock Narratives* and 2003's *One Word Extinguisher* have become classic lessons in instrumental beat making. With the highly anticipated *Surrounded by Silence* (Warp Records) just released, the versatile Scott Herren (a.k.a. Prefuse 73) opened his studio doors to a variety of collaborators. XLR8R took a moment with him to discuss gear, sampling, and how to cooperate with fellow musicians.

IF YOU COULD HAVE A ROBOT TO DO THE BULLSHIT WORK IN YOUR STUDIO, WHAT WOULD YOU HAVE THEM DO?

Good question. The hardest part for me is actually finding all these vinyl things that match. Once you get a track going, it's a lot more fun. The shit work is chopping the samples perfect, but I don't really chop samples perfect. The way I chop samples is kind of careless; I don't try to match bpm's and shit.

ARE YOU STILL USING THE AKAI MPC AND PRO TOOLS SETUP?

Yeah, and that new Moog Voyager. When I make Prefuse beats I generally stay away from playing; that's not my steeze. I like to work on samples. I like digging without the pretentious aspect of it. I don't give a fuck. I don't care where they came from, I don't care how rare they are—I'll find a way to make it sound like you haven't heard it before. It's an art form in itself, and sample laws... that don't mean shit to me; like suing and shelving a record, I really couldn't give a fuck. If you're going to be a complete dumb fuck and take Michael Jackson and loop the entire fucking song, that's some shit. But if you're going to chop your shit somehow, or find a small loop, you're not doing anything, and I think as far as the original artist is concerned, that's just out of respect.

HOW DO YOU DIVIDE THE RESPONSIBILITIES WHEN YOU COLLABORATE WITH ANOTHER PRODUCER LIKE NOBODY OR DANTE CARFAGNA?

Surprisingly, Dante I don't even know; Turntable Lab hooked that up. He did what I thought was an amazing remix on that Piano Overlord EP that they put out. I was like, "Damn, how did this kid sample just a little bit, and make it so beautiful?" He burned me; it was great. I'm a fan of his music for sure. That's the perfect example of what I'm saying; his record (*Express Rising* on Memphis Records) would be hard to make without samples. As far as Nobody is concerned, that's just more like drunken interaction. That's some whole different shit, that's like me and him getting crunk. That's fun.

HOW IS IT DIFFERENT WITH SOMEONE LIKE GHOSTFACE OR EL-P AS OPPOSED TO A PRODUCER?

If you're working with an MC, that's like "Yeah man, keep it like this. Keep it on some B-boy shit or some love shit." You just explain and get the point across with what you want to do with the song. That's

the main difference; you're not getting so into it. With that song ["HideYa Face"], it's a little different because El-P like went out of his way and did his own version of the track too, so that was fresh.

DO YOU LIKE WORKING ALONE OR WITH OTHERS?

I get more done alone; I'm definitely a loner when it comes to work. I like it but there's certain people I love, love, love to work with. Like this album has everybody from Blonde Redhead to Masta Killa, GZA, Wu Tang, Camu, Aesop [Rock]; tons, like this close friend Claudia—she went off on it. She just killed it on one tune.

HAVE YOU HAD TROUBLE WORKING WITH OTHER ARTISTS?

There have been people who it's been disappointing as far as their reaction to me stepping to them. That's been the most frustrating thing that I've dealt with. There's people that come from a totally different style, which isn't within a hip-hop realm. I might step to somebody that doesn't necessarily make hip-hop, and have them [say] "Uh... what do you want me to do here?" I'm like, "Well, yo, let's talk, it's easy." Some people are just instantly down and understand what you're asking, will get on the beat and get around. I'm never the kind of person who's going to throw somebody a beat and be like "There's your beat; you're never going to have a chance to do something on something else." I don't consider myself so important.

*Surrounded by Silence*, featuring The Books, Nobody, Beans, Aesop Rock, Broadcast, and others, is out now on Warp Records. [www.warprecords.com](http://www.warprecords.com)



In Prefuse 73's studio (clockwise from top left): Akai MPC 2000, Pro Tools screenshot, Moog Voyager

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## COMPONENT COMPARISON: DRUMCORE, DRUM DROPS, AND STYLUS RMX STUDIO PRODUCTION SOFTWARE

The combination of these three products makes me feel a little like hip-hop super-producer DJ Premier or reggae don King Tubby, having the luxury of choosing between drummers Style Scott or Sly Dunbar for my next dub track, or enlisting Sugarhill Gang's Keith Le Blanc to help with a rap break. All three programs offer varied beats and loads of humanized, soulful drumming. Here's XLR8R's guide to the dopest drum production software available. *Jesse Terry*



### DRUMCORE

MSRP: \$249, [WWW.DRUMCORE.COM](http://WWW.DRUMCORE.COM)  
This is part virtual instrument/part sample library, with an interface that lets you choose from a variety of drummers and alter, speed up, slow down, and "Gabrielize" (randomize) an 8 GB library of pristinely recorded drum performances. Sly Dunbar, Matt Sorum (G'n'R), DJ Syze-Up (Ultra Naté), and other session drummers were recorded playing beats, fills, and hits at different tempos using only the best analog preamps, mics and mixers.



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A set of extremely dope DVDs pristinely recorded with vintage drum samples in different tempo-mapped formats (Apple Loops, Rex files, Aiffs, etc). Drummers include reggae legends Style Scott of Roots Radics, Leroy "Horsemouth" Wallace, and Keith Le Blanc (Sugarhill Band) and Jan Kincaid (Brand New Heavies). If you're not a fan of a little bit of analog grunginess, this may not be for you. For me, it only adds to the attraction.



### SPECTRASONICS STYLUS RMX

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More flash for your cache: Durable flash memory is getting cheaper by the day, so your hard disk MP3 player (iPod) better do something special to hold its own. Both of these MP3 players record audio in WAV format, making them a great choice to transform your vinyl into CD or MP3 or record your next late-night DJ mix. The iRiver H320 has an awesome color screen that can display photos and even text documents. When it comes to playing different file types, iRiver is as egalitarian as you can get (I don't even know what an OGG file is, but this thing plays it), and if you fret about music management software taking over every file on your PC, this is also the player for you. Any current Mac or Windows OS will recognize the player as a drive, no software installation necessary. JetAudio's iAudio M3 deserves more attention for being the only high-capacity player out there with an in-line remote. Taking the screen off the player makes it sleeker, with a lot less bulk overall in your coat pocket. This design also means you have artist info close at hand, and you don't have to "wear" your MP3 player on your person like a dumbass. *Ryan Sommer*



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**PROS:** Kill thousands of Orcs, create tracks with one hand.  
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Dark & very nasty Tribal House from the mighty Sondas label. Big Room Sirens and Thundepuss Tribal drums kick out on both tracks from Frank Maurel.	
	British Promo 12" MR149614 \$15
This is something to do with the boys at Sumsonic Records a cool deep prog-house remix of Goldfrapp - Black Cherry.	
	British 12" MR149595 \$11
Yet again we see some twisted beats from Superchumbo and some superb vocal skills from Celeda. Mixes from Chus & Ceballos and Murk & Superchumbo Dub.	
	British 12" MR146447 \$11
'Deep Sleepless Night' has been building a roster of support throughout recent months, including the likes of Deep Dish, Erick Morillo and John Digweed.	

Listen to MP3 samples of these tunes at [htfr.com/charts](http://htfr.com/charts)

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Top 5 Drum 'n' Bass Chart April 2005	
	British Promo 12" MR150251 \$11
Hive makes his long awaited, overdue debut on Metalheadz with two absolute killers which have been smashed on dubplate by Grooverider, Goldie, Bailey & Randall & more.	
	British Promo 12" MR150255 \$11
Subfocus lays down his first single for Ram, both tracks are huge anthems which are currently being championed by DJs like Grooverider, Andy C, Adam F, Fresh & many more.	
	British Promo 12" MR150246 \$11
Amit proves to be in a league of his own with his first release on Bingo, two unique tracks with Amit's signature jarring breaks, clever percussion & spooky atmospherics.	
	British Promo 12" MR149357 \$11
Echo is firm on all cylinders for the latest Violence release with an unbeatable bass heavy killer called Falling, on the flip Calyx rolls out a dark remix of Out Of Time.	
	British Promo 12" MR150174 \$11
Artificial Intelligence move into 2005 with a seriously hot track which has been played universally by many top DJs & is now here on Bryan Gee's established V recordings.	

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MR128974..... **\$57**

Top 5 Trance Chart April 2005	
	Dutch 12" MR149433 \$15
Following up the Tiesto cained who's the starter Ernesto v Bastian unleash this monster with plaudits coming from Armin Van Buuren, Tiesto, Judge Jules and more than can be listed you know this will be a biggie.	
	Belgium Promo 12" MR149211 \$15
Watch this one closely throughout 2005. Also known as Mike Push, Solar Factor churn out a top Trance banger again!	
	British Promo 12" MR150779 \$12
Restricted Motion is an anthem in the making with full DJ support from Paul Van Dyk, Armin and Ferry Corsten. John Askew adds his trademark tougher beats on the remix.	
	British Promo 12" MR150088 \$11
Last year 'Remember' was the favourite of every DJ worth their salt. This year we have 'Gravidy' a top quality summer vibe that's sure to be played in Ibiza.	
	British Promo 12" MR150632 \$11
Anjuna beats was easily the best UK trance label of 2004 and during 2005 it still seems to be taking no prisoners. Includes a remix from Ozgur Can.	

Listen to MP3 samples of these tunes at [htfr.com/charts](http://htfr.com/charts)

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Top 5 HTFR Rare 12" Vinyl Chart April 2005	
	British 12" MR147603 \$28
Without doubt one of the all time greatest dance music records ever created. If you ain't got a copy of this in your collection then you ain't a DJ.	
	US Import 12" MR9490 \$23
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	British 12" MR106297 \$15
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	British 12" MR142480 \$19
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	UK DBI Promo 12" MR133143 \$28
Orbital have departed and released their final album (July 2004). Their first record 'Chime' has received many mixes. This ep contains nine of the best and rarest mixes.	

Listen to MP3 samples of these tunes at [htfr.com/charts](http://htfr.com/charts)

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### STANTON T-120 TURNTABLE

MSRP. \$399.99, WWW.STANTONDJ.COM

At the recent NAIM audio/gear retailers' convention, Stanton unveiled a new look for their turntables, mixers, and CDJs. The T-120 turntable has a hot, brushed aluminum design and a feature set that makes the Technics 1200 look decidedly old fashioned. It boasts the most powerful torque of any turntable out there for immediate start ups, two sets of start/stop buttons, and comes with either a straight or traditional curved arm. Key features like reverse, braking speed, and a Motor Off mode allow DJs to get tricky with their scratching techniques. It seems like Apple's iPod has taught the industry a lesson: in an environment packed with feature-rich products, sleek looks can still seal the deal. *Jesse Terry*



### GUERRILLA HOME RECORDING BOOK

MSRP. \$22.95, WWW.BACKBEATBOOKS.COM

Karl Coryat has compiled a studio tricks reference book for all aspiring musicians who may have less than perfect project studio or recording gear. The book covers studio basics (i.e. signal flow, mixing consoles, patchbays), as well as all the tech terms and proper routing you will need to get plugged in. The general focus throughout the text is geared towards folks recording live instruments, kit drums, and vocals. Digital and analog sequencing for electronic musicians receives a bit of discussion. *Praxis*

**PROS:** First book to accurately explain compression and expansion in layman's terms.

**CONS:** Little discussion regarding electronic synthesis.

Guerrilla Home Recording

### M-AUDIO OZONIC KEYBOARD MIDI CONTROLLER

MSRP. \$599.95, WWW.M-AUDIO.COM

Does M-Audio actually read my reviews? It seems like they've answered every question I had about the **Ozonic's** predecessor, the Ozone—so get ready for programmable knobs and sliders galore! The Ozonic adds another octave range to its keyboard, and more importantly four 24-bit/96kHz FireWire ins and outs—now you can pre-cue sessions in Live or Traktor without switching to mono, or record a drum kit with four mics. The slider, knob, and button selection (40 in total) seems to have been designed for users of Live or Reason, and gives hands-on access to mixing and on-the-fly effects. Setting up these features is made even easier when you download M-Audio's Enigma software. A nice upgrade for users who have outgrown their Oxygen 8s; the Ozonic is the interface I've been looking for. *Jesse Terry*



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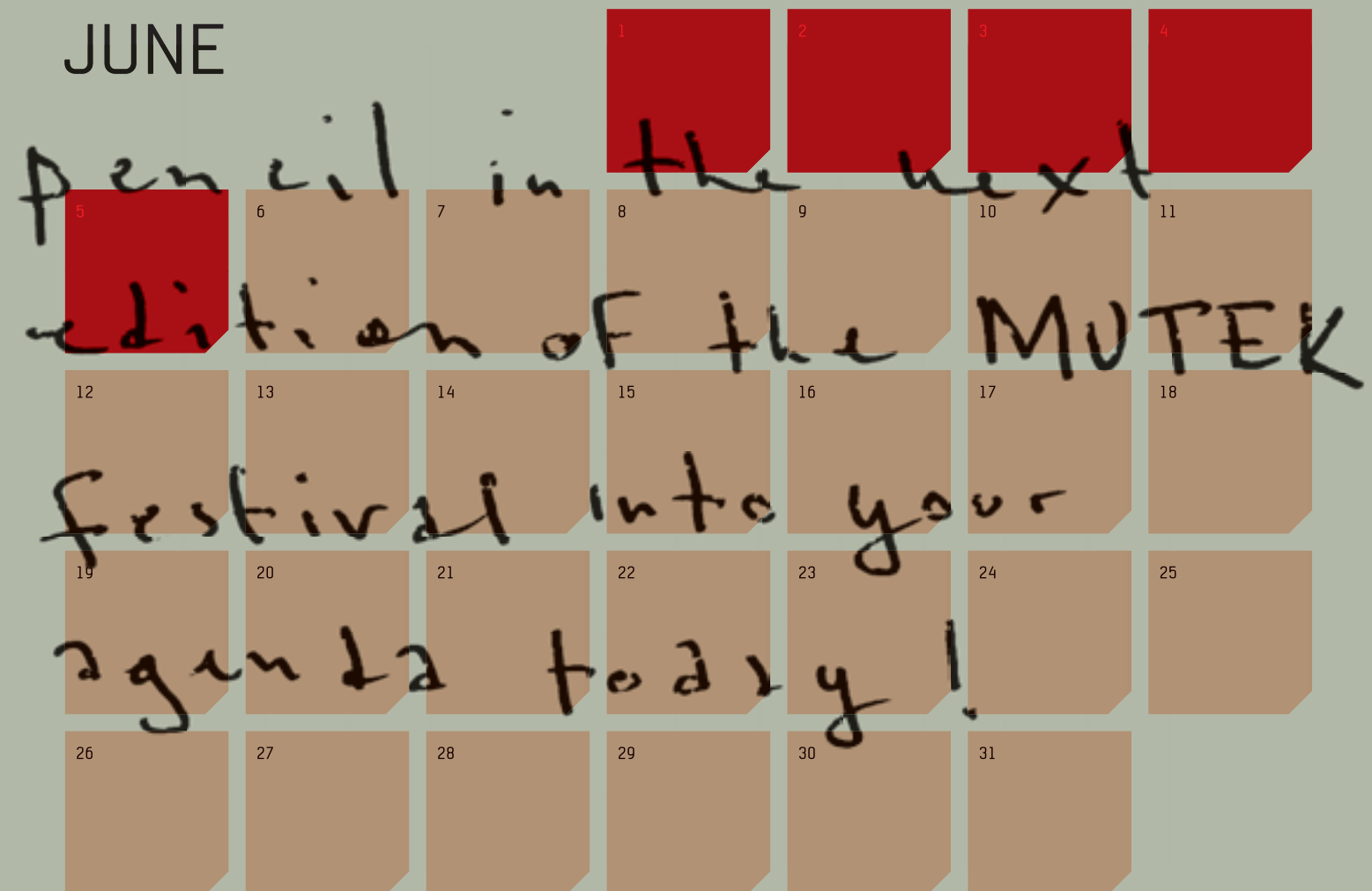
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XLR8R

# VIS-ED: MAYA HAYUK

Step into a cerebrally stimulating world of punk mixtapes and paintings of horny dolphins.

WORDS: VIVIAN HOST IMAGES: MAYA HAYUK



Don't call Maya Hayuk a perfectionist. "More like an imperfectionist," she confesses, her keyboard guffawing each time a lithe finger touches down on a little square letter.

When Hayuk's slender digits aren't typing missives to the masses, or updating her comprehensive website, they're painting psychedelic reflections of everyday life in eye-saturating color. Tempera-bright bongos, neon unicorns, profusely hairy people in hot tubs, and her signature tag—a hot pink donut—are just some of the images that have coated viewers' visual cortexes in a cotton candy-like haze. Her recent work can be seen in ads for Absolut Raspberri, at art shows around the world, and on the barns of the American Northeast (she's part of The Barnstormers collective).

But Hayuk—who comes to Brooklyn by way of Baltimore, then San Francisco—is not just handy with a brush. She's also become known for her portraiture and photo essays; her shots of Dangermouse, El-P, The Faint, and Tracy & The Plastics have appeared in magazines around the globe. She recently curated her first gallery show, *Alone In This Together*, which rethinks democracy by collecting accessibly priced work from printmakers including Ben Woodward and Clare Rojas; in 2005, the show will be traveling to Austin, Montreal, and Portland, among other locales.

We were hoping Hayuk would make us a mixtape with the likes of Scratch Acid, Wire, and Blue Oyster Cult on it, but she was busy in San Francisco painting a hotel room. Instead, she sent us this window into her world with the disclaimer "It's 6AM and I'm taking a break from painting, so it may read a little...uh, faded." No problem.

[www.mayahayuk.com](http://www.mayahayuk.com)

**How did you come up with your signature dripping donut logo?**

I was splattering paint around and hit a wall in San Francisco with a can of pink latex paint. As it started to ooze, it looked like icing, so after it dried I added the outline and highlights.

**The latest stuff of yours I've seen has lots of diamonds...and hairy people. What's up with that?**

My brother Kima sent me *The Sims* from his work at E.A. and I was fascinated with the crystal monitors of well-being that floated above the characters' heads. I imagined that somewhere there's a warehouse with a stockpile of these things sitting idle, waiting to be assigned to truly happy people. Those piles of happiness would then have a crystal happiness orb floating above them and there can even be an orb of happiness above that, and so on. Non-utilized happiness times infinity.

Hairy hairness is just fun to render. It's really methodical and depending on the patterns, I can create shape and form to flatness. The renderings on skin I think of as grain, like wood, but applied to illustrate the physical traits of flesh as well as to illuminate the inner workings of a human's character.

**You seem to get so much done...What's your secret?**

I feel like I get about one tenth of what I have continuously growing on the back burner. I make piles and lists, hold very strange hours, continuously reprioritize, and am generally doing several things at once all over different areas of my apartment. My studio's my living room, which has grown like ivy into my kitchen. I have a separate room that's my office and photography epicenter. It's all punctuated with a bedroom void of anything but a bed. It's pretty perfect and I'll go for days without seeing the light of day, which I can't say is exactly healthy.

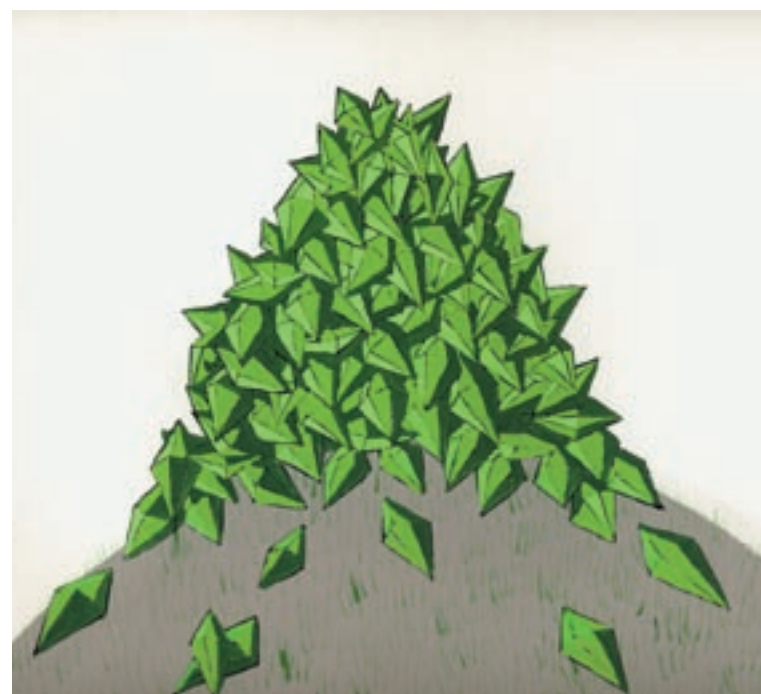
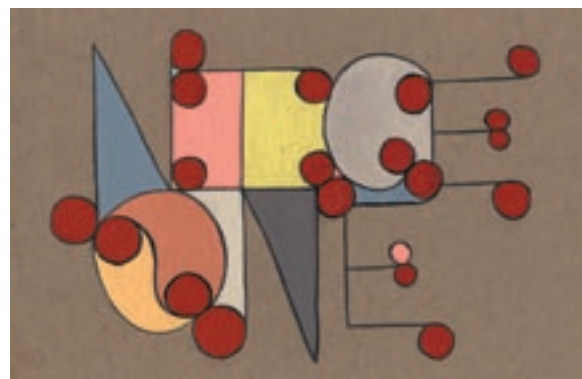
**What did you like to draw when you were little?**

Lots and lots of people with too many fingers, princesses in poofy dresses, and tiny villages. Drawing was one of the only "games" I wanted to play with my friends, aside from "dress up," "school," "wiz-



ABOVE: "Magichands" 2005 (litho print, Analogue Press) 12" x 18"  
RIGHT: Exclusive piece for XLR8R Vis-Ed, 2005





ards,” and “porno photographer.” Needless to say, I didn’t maintain many friendships and became kind of a hermit.

**What’s the best advice you’ve ever received?**  
“Try this.”

**Do you think of your work in terms of a series or just paint or draw whatever comes to mind?**

Both. I paint what I want and it’s the next sentence from the last painting I made. Sometimes the continuity isn’t obvious right away, but it eventually sets in. Each craft and love cross-pollinates and informs the next. A song inspires a drawing, which inspires doing some research, and possibly writing an essay which inspires a photo series (or some combination thereof).

**How do you think your punk rock background has influenced you as an artist and a person?**

It made me want to truly forge my own freedom, evoke a chosen family, and define terms of “success.” I wasn’t angry enough to listen to hardcore alone at home, but going to shows made me want to document/photograph something so epic, even though everyone talked about how much better it was back in the day. It happens in all realms of culture, always. We wind up romanticizing pasts that we used to begrudge and it makes me want to always remain present. The important thing is that a global voice of dissent found ways to comment on the atrocities of humanity with a kind of utopic vision.

**What band or artist was a big inspiration to you growing up?**

I’m genetically encoded with the classical music and traditional Ukrainian folk my parents weaned me on. It was Pink Floyd that made me rethink everything I had previously assumed as “truth” or “reality.” My brother turned me on to all this *Dungeons and Dragons*-y prog rock, which only lead to harder things. He became a Deadhead-gone-raver and I turned into a New Wave/psychedelic head. We came back full circle to appreciating each other’s music when we both got into Can around the same time.

**How do you approach your photography? Do you see it as related to your art or separate?**

Photography is an art and it very much relates to my

other interests, to everything I do. Thomas Campbell has had a huge impact on how I approach the overall vision of being an artist and not compartmentalizing my varying means of expression. I wouldn’t be able to be a painter if I wasn’t also a photographer and vice versa. When I am making a portrait of a musician, I am looking for what is already there in that personality during the quietest moment.

**What three albums or songs do you have on heavy rotation right now?**

I’ve been obsessively recording my record collection into the computer to make insanely eclectic mixes for trade with other music-obsessed friends, so that’s most of what I listen to. Aside from that, the three records I played today were: Genesis: *The Lamb Lies*

*Down on Broadway*; Linda Perhacs: *Parallelograms*; and Prefuse 73: *Surrounded By Silence* (which has a great Linda Perhacs sample on it, coincidentally)

**What were some of the most memorable moments of collaborating with Eva and Scott on the Savath & Savalas artwork and photos?**

Getting a chance to just relax with Scott, who’s got this amazing disposition that’s equal parts spaz and tranquil monk. Eva is one of the most beautiful, strong women I have ever met and she would take me exploring through the haze and maze of Barcelona’s old city. Our ideas for the project would evolve out of retarded conversation and drunken binges, which is a great way to collaborate.

Find more from this interview online at [www.xlr8r.com](http://www.xlr8r.com).

**LEFT PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:**  
“Mini Golf Fuck Mountain” 2004 (gouache/ink on paper) 11” x 17”  
“Nice One/Nice Won” 2005 (gouache on cardboard) 8” x 18”  
RJD2’s Exotic Talk EP photo and design 2004  
Mixtape cover 2004 (silkscreen, hand drawing)

**ABOVE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:**  
Oxytocin Barn 2004  
“Headcleaner” 2004 (gouache on paper) 11” x 14”  
“Big Ass Bong Bow” 2004 (gouache, ink, latex on panel) 48” x 48”  
“Nice Pile” 2004 (ink, paint on paper)



# OUR CULTURE IS OUR RESISTANCE

A NEW PHOTOGRAPHIC COLLECTION DOCUMENTS THE VILLAGE-BY-VILLAGE STRUGGLE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS IN GUATEMALA. WORDS: STACEY DUGAN PHOTOS: JONATHAN MOLLER



In Guatemala, mourning is a privilege, as are the official recognitions of bereavement: a certificate of death, a grave with a marker, a funeral service. Particularly during the early 1980s, Guatemalan peasant and indigenous communities mourned collectively, and on the run. There was no time to bury the bodies of loved ones, victims of a 36-year-long armed conflict the government used to validate its atrocious acts of genocide. Things happened in a flash: the army attacked villages, murdered everyone they could catch, and burned what was left. Mothers ran past the mutilated bodies of their dead children. People who lay in hiding suffocated their dogs, lest their barking attract a soldier's attention. Both the living and the dead were stripped of dignity.

Now, due in large part to the peace accords of 1996 and recommendations of the U.N. sponsored Commission for Historical Clarification of 1999, the mostly Mayan people affected are returning to the land they fled, resettling, and exhuming the bodies they were once forced to leave behind. Jonathan Moller has documented that process over the past 10 years, accompanying returning refugees as a human rights worker and recording the exhumations as staff photographer of a forensic anthropology team. The resulting

book, *Our Culture is Our Resistance: Repression, Refuge, and Healing in Guatemala*, is a look at the aftermath of a war that primarily targeted innocent civilians.

Human rights have always been the primary focus of Moller's work; photography secondary. "Strangely enough, I can often be very uncomfortable photographing people," Moller explains. "I'm hyper sensitive to issues of exploitation with the use of my photographs. [Being a human rights worker] the people understand that I'm there in a support capacity for them—living with the family, eating with people, helping people work in the fields sometimes—and they've requested that I be there. But, particularly in the [Communities of Population and Resistance, who fled to the mountains or lowland jungle areas and developed clandestine, self-sufficient villages], people were avidly wanting to get their story out."

Moller collected firsthand accounts from survivors of the massacres and juxtaposed them with his photographs. Like many in the book, Don Faustino, a member of the Ixcán CPR community, reflects on his experience with anger and a sense of irredeemable loss: "The army owes us—not just for the lives that were lost but for our material possessions, everything that was burned and destroyed. What I mean to say is that the army owes us everything, everything that constitutes a human life."

The exhumation photographs tell another side of the story, unearthing the secrets of a government that publicly denied genocide while burying its 200,000 victims (as estimated by the Commission for Historical Clarification). This is a particularly important reclamation process for Mayan people, whose core belief in the active connection between the living and the dead requires a sacred burial place.

Taken to accompany Moller's work with a forensic anthropology team, these photographs are scientific but painfully human. Stare long enough and you can recreate the crimes. One skeleton can be identified as a woman only by her pañuelo (traditional Mayan women's headdress)—decayed, it still perfectly encircles her skull like a shadowy halo. Her only clothing is the remains of a skirt, torn and tangled around her knees. The bones of her face and skull are completely crumpled, her teeth broken and jaw stretched to an unnaturally wide angle in an eternal, silent scream.

Even dignified burials will never heal these wounds of unjust loss. "There's still a lot of fear in Guatemala," says Moller, "and clearly there's a lot of pain, and a huge distance to be traveled toward both personal and collective healing in that country."

Photo courtesy of powerHouse Books, taken from *Our Culture Is Our Resistance: Repression, Refuge, And Healing in Guatemala*. [www.powerhousebooks.com](http://www.powerhousebooks.com)

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